THE

NATURAL HISTORY

OF

B I R D S,

COMPILED FROM THE BEST AUTHORITIES,

AND

ILLUSTRATED BY A GREAT VARIETY OF

COPPER PLATES,

COMPRISING NEAR

ONE HUNDRED FIGURES,

Accurately drawn from Nature, and beautifully engraved.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Editor of the following pages a ſhort time ago ſubmitted to the candour of the Public "A NATURAL HISTORY OF BEASTS," which was honoured with a reception ſo flattering as to induce him to think that a "HISTORY OF BIRDS" executed preciſely on the ſame plan would be an acceptable companion to the former work.

Under this idea the preſent volume was compiled. The marking characters of the various ſpecies of the feathered tribe, will, it is hoped, be found accurately deſcribed; and of the habits, manners, ſeaſons of migration, and incubation, &c. of the wild birds, and the methods of breeding and managing the domeſtic kinds, the accounts accord with the lateſt and moſt approved authorities.

Of the Engravings which accompany theſe volumes it is unneceſſary for us to ſpeak; they are before the Public; and to that tribunal this Epitome is ſubmitted with due deference by the Editor.

S. J.

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EXPLA-

EXPLANATION

OF SOME

TECHNICAL TERMS

Uſed in this Volume.

BASTARD WING: a ſmall joint riſing at the end of the middle-part of the wing, or the *cubitus*, on which are three or five feathers.

Coverts of the tail: thoſe feathers which cover the baſe of the tail.

Greater coverts of the wings: the feathers that lie immediately over the quill feathers and ſecondary feathers.

Irides: the circles round the pupils of the eyes.

Leſſer coverts of the wings: the ſmall feathers that lie in ſeveral rows on the bones of the wings.—The *under coverts* are thoſe that line the inſide of the wings.

Quill-feathers: the largeſt feathers of the wings, or thoſe that riſe from the firſt bone.

Secondary feathers: thoſe that riſe from the ſecond bone.

Scapular feathers: thoſe that riſe from the ſhoulders, and cover the ſides of the back.

Semi-palmated: ſpoken of a foot, the webs of which only reach half-way of the toes.

Vent-feathers: thoſe that lie from the vent to the tail.

THE

NATURAL HISTORY

OF

BIRDS.

INTRODUCTION.

Of BIRDS in general.

WITH inhabitants every part of nature is abundantly furniſhed. The foreſts, the waters, and the depths of the earth, have their reſpective tenants; while the yielding air, and thoſe tracts of ſeeming ſpace, too elevated for man to ſoar to, are traverſed by multitudes of the moſt beautiful beings of the creation. Though every rank of animals ſeems calculated for its deſtined ſituation, yet none are more apparently ſo than birds: they ſhare the vegetable ſpoils of the earth in common with the quadrupeds, and, to compenſate for their want of ſtrength, are ſupplied with ſwiftneſs: to avoid that power which they cannot oppoſe, they are endowed with the faculty of aſcending into the air. In the ſcale of nature, it muſt be admitted

admitted that birds fall below quadrupeds, and are leſs imitative of human endowments; yet they certainly are the next in rank, and greatly ſurpaſs fiſhes and inſects, not only in the ſtructure of their bodies, but in their ſagacity.

As birds are chiefly formed to inhabit the empty regions of air, all their parts are ſuited to that purpoſe. Externally they ſeem ſurpriſingly adapted for ſwiftneſs of motion. The ſhape of their body is ſharp before, to facilitate its paſſage through the air; it then riſes by a gradual ſwell, and falls off in an expanſive tail, that aſſiſts in keeping it buoyant, while the fore parts are cleaving the air by their ſharpneſs. They have, not unaptly, been compared to a veſſel making its way through the water; the trunk of the body anſwering to the hold, the head to the prow, the tail to the rudder, and the wings to the oars.

From the ſimple conformation of birds, they have, as may naturally be ſuppoſed, but few diſeaſes: one, however, they are ſubject to, from which quadrupeds are exempt; this is their annual molting; for, once in every year, all kinds of birds caſt off their old covering, and obtain a new one. They are all diſordered during the molting ſeaſon; the courageous bird then loſes its fierceneſs, and ſuch as are weakly often expire under this natural operation.

The production of young ſeems to be the great æra of happineſs in animals of this claſs. At that time nothing can exceed their induſtry and ſpirit: in defence of its young, the moſt timid

timid becomes courageous; and thoſe of the rapacious kind are, at this ſeaſon, uncommonly fierce and active: they haſten with their prey, yet throbbing with life, to the neſt, and early initiate their young to ſcenes of ſlaughter and cruelty. Birds of a milder nature are not leſs buſily employed; the minuter kinds diſcontinue their ſinging, being engaged in the more important purſuits of common ſubſiſtence.

Birds in general, though naturally timid, are ſeldom ſcared from their uſual haunts. Fear, climate, or hunger, are the chief incitements to migration; from one of theſe powerful motives thoſe which are called birds of paſſage annually forſake us for ſome time, and make their regular returns. The curioſity of mankind has been greatly excited by theſe annual emigrations, and yet few ſubjects remain ſo much involved in darkneſs. It is generally ſuppoſed, however, that the cauſe of their retreat from theſe parts of Europe, is either a ſcarcity of food at certain ſeaſons, the alteration of the climate, or the want of a ſecure aſylum from the perſecution of man, during the times of incubation, and bringing up their young.

It may appear aſtoniſhing how ſuch irrational animals ſhould be able to perform ſuch long journies as they are known to take, and how they ſhould know whither to ſteer when they engage in ſuch an enterprize: but the ſame inſtinct which governs all their actions, perhaps, operates here. Indeed they rather follow the weather than the country; they ſteer only from colder

colder or warmer climates into those of an oppoſite nature; and, as they proceed, finding the variations of the air agreeable to them, they go on till they diſcover land to repoſe on.

Birds, in all countries, live longer than the quadrupeds or inſects of the ſame climate. Even the life of a man is ſhort when compared to that which ſome of theſe animals enjoy. It is ſaid, that ſwans have lived three hundred years; geeſe have been known to live eighty years; and linnets and other ſmall birds are often found to reach fourteen or fifteen years, though impriſoned the whole time in cages.

All birds are divided by Linnæus into ſix claſſes. 1. Thoſe of the *rapacious kind.* 2. *The pie kind.* 3. *The poultry kind.* 4. *The ſparrow kind.* 5. *The duck kind,* and 6. *The crane kind.* The various kinds of land birds are comprehended in the firſt four, and thoſe which belong to the water in the two laſt.

Such is the diviſion of Linnæus with reſpect to birds; but we have ventured to differ from him in ſeveral particulars, though, like him, we have divided the hiſtory of them into ſix claſſes; firſt giving the hiſtory of a few birds that cannot well be arranged ſyſtematically, viz. the oſtrich, the caſſowary, the emu, the dodo, &c. Theſe, by their extraordinary magnitude, are ſufficiently diſtinguiſhable from others, and, from their incapacity of flying, lead a different life from the reſt of the feathered creation.

THE OSTRICH.

THE oſtrich ſeems to unite in itſelf the claſs of quadrupeds and birds; for though it has the general outline and properties of a bird, it retains many of the marks of the quadruped. It is cloathed with a plumage that more reſembles hair than feathers, and its internal parts are as much like thoſe of quadrupeds as of the bird creation. This animal, therefore, may be conſidered as filling up that chaſm in nature which ſeparates one claſs of beings from another.

Of all birds the oſtrich is the largeſt. Travellers aſſure us, that they are ſometimes found as tall as a man on horſeback; and ſome of thoſe which have been ſhewn in England exceeded ſeven feet in height. The head and bill reſemble thoſe of a duck, the neck has ſome ſimilitude to that of a ſwan, and the legs and thighs are like thoſe of a hen; though the whole appearance bears a ſtrong reſemblance to that of a camel. But to deſcend to particulars: this animal is uſually ſeven feet high from the top of the head to the ground, and about four from the back to the ground: when the neck is ſtretched out in a right line, it meaſures ſix feet from the head to the rump, and the tail about a foot more. One of the wings is a foot and an half long without the feathers, and with the feathers three feet. The plumage is generally black and white, though it is ſaid to be ſometimes grey: the largeſt feathers, which are at the extremities of the wings

and tail, are uſually white; the next row is black and white; and the ſmall feathers on the back and belly are a mixture of black and white, This animal has no feathers on the ſides of the thighs, nor under the wings: that half of the neck which is next to the body, is covered with ſmaller feathers than thoſe on the belly and back, and like them are a mixture of black and white.

Theſe feathers are peculiar to the oſtrich: other birds have ſeveral ſorts, ſome of which are ſoft and downy, and others hard and ſtrong; but almoſt all the feathers of an oſtrich are as ſoft as down, and utterly unfit to ſerve it for flying, or to defend it againſt external injury. The head and the upper part of the neck of this animal are covered with very fine white ſhining hair, with ſmall tufts in ſome places, conſiſting of about ten or twelve hairs, which grow from a ſingle ſhaft about the thickneſs of a pin. At the end of each wing there is a kind of ſpur reſembling the quill of a porcupine, which is of an horny ſubſtance, hollow, and about an inch long. There are two of theſe on each wing, the largeſt of which is at the extremity of the bone of the wing, and the other about a foot lower. The neck appears proportionably more ſlender than that of other birds, from its not being covered all over with feathers.

The bill of the oſtrich is ſhort and pointed; the external form of the eye reſembles that of a man, the upper eye-lid being furniſhed with eye-laſhes which are longer than thoſe on the eye-

eye-lid below; the tongue is very ſhort and ſmall, and compoſed of cartilages and ligaments, intermixed with fleſhy fibres.

The thighs, which are large and plump, are covered with a fleſh-coloured ſkin, which appears greatly wrinkled. Some of theſe animals have a few ſmall ſcattered hairs on their thighs, and others are entirely without; the legs are covered with large ſcales, and the ends of the feet are cloven, having two very large toes on each, which are alſo covered with ſcales; the toes are of unequal ſizes; that on the inſide is the largeſt, and is about ſeven inches long, including the claw, which is three quarters of an inch in length, and is nearly the ſame in breadth. The other two have no claws, and do not exceed four inches in length.

The oſtrich is a native of the torrid regions of Africa, and has long been celebrated by thoſe who have mentioned the animals of that region. It ſeems particularly formed to live among the ſandy and burning deſerts of the torrid zone, and ſeldom migrates into tracts that are more mild or fertile. The Arabians aſſert that the oſtrich never drinks; and indeed the place of its habitation ſeems to confirm the aſſertion. In the moſt ſolitary and horrid deſerts, where there are few vegetables to cloath the ſurface of the earth, and where the rain never comes to refreſh it, oſtriches are ſeen in large flocks, which, to a diſtant beholder, appear like a regiment of cavalry. The moſt barren deſert is capable of ſupplying theſe animals with proviſion, as they can eat almoſt any thing;

and thoſe dreary tracts are doubly grateful, as they afford both food and ſecurity.

Of all animals, the oſtrich is the moſt voracious; it will devour leather, graſs, hair, ſtones, metals, or any thing that is given to it; but thoſe ſubſtances which the coats of the ſtomach cannot ſoften paſs whole; ſo that glaſs, ſtones, or iron, are excluded in the ſame form in which they were devoured. Valiſnieri found the ſtomach of an oſtrich filled with a jumbled collection of braſs, copper, iron, tin, lead, wood, ſtones, glaſs, cords, nuts, and graſs; and, among the reſt, a piece of ſtone of above a pound weight. It is probable that this animal is obliged to fill up the great capacity of its ſtomach in order to be at eaſe; and when nutritious ſubſtances are not to be obtained, it ſupplies the void with any thing that offers.

In their native deſerts theſe animals live chiefly upon vegetables, where they lead a ſocial inoffenſive life. Their eggs are very large, ſome of them meaſuring above five inches in diameter, and weighing above fifteen pounds. Theſe birds are very prolific, and uſually lay from forty to fifty eggs at a clutch. The ſhells of theſe eggs are extremely hard, and it has been currently ſaid, that the female depoſits them in the ſand, to be hatched by the heat of the ſun; but this opinion is erroneous; for Kolben, who has ſeen great numbers of them at the Cape of Good Hope, affirms that they ſit on their eggs like other birds, and that the male and female take this office by turns, as he had frequent opportunities of obſerving. Some authors

thors alſo inform us, that oſtriches forſake their young as ſoon as they are excluded from the ſhell; but this is certainly a miſtake; for Kolben aſſures us, that the young ones are not able even to walk for ſeveral days after they are hatched; during which time the old ones are very aſſiduous in ſupplying them with graſs, and defending them from danger.

It is on account of the beauty of a part of the plumage of this harmleſs animal, particularly the long feathers of which the wings and tail are compoſed, that man has been ſo active in purſuing it to its deſerts. Pliny aſſures us, that in his time the caps and helmets of the ſoldiers were adorned with theſe plumes; the ladies of the Eaſt uſe them as an ornament in their dreſs, and the ladies of Great Britain have lately decorated their heads with the feathers of this animal. They are alſo uſed by undertakers, who place them upon hearſes, and the heads of the horſes which draw them, when the nodding plumes add greatly to the ſolemnity of the funeral.

The ſavage nations of Africa hunt theſe animals for their fleſh as well as for their plumage; they conſider it as a great dainty, and ſometimes breed them tame, that they may eat the young ones, of which the female is accounted the moſt delicate food. The eggs are ſaid to be nouriſhing, and well taſted.

The Arabians train up their beſt and fleeteſt horſes for the chace of the oſtrich. As ſoon as the hunter comes within ſight of its prey, he advances with a gentle gallop, ſo as ſtill to keep

the bird in view, but not to terrify him from the plain into the mountains. The oſtrich is the ſwifteſt of all known animals which make uſe of their legs in flight; therefore, when he obſerves himſelf purſued at a diſtance, he at firſt runs but gently, either from the inſenſibility of his danger, or ſuppoſing himſelf ſure of eſcaping. In this ſituation there is a ſtrong ſimilitude between him and a man running at full ſpeed: his wings, like two arms, keep working with a motion correſpondent to that of his legs, and his ſpeed, if properly employed, would ſoon take him out of the view of his purſuers; but inſtead of moving in a direct line, he takes his courſe in circles, while the hunters relieve each other, meet him at unexpected turns, and keep him wholly employed for two or three ſucceſſive days. At length, finding all power of eſcape impoſſible, and exhauſted with hunger and fatigue, he endeavours to hide himſelf from thoſe enemies which he cannot avoid, by covering his head in the ſand or the firſt thicket he arrives at. Some of theſe animals venture to face their purſuers, and, though in general the moſt gentle animal in nature, when driven to deſperation, will valiantly defend themſelves with their beaks, wings, and feet; and ſo great is the force of their motion, that a man would be utterly unable to withſtand them.

Sometimes, in order to take the oſtrich, a man covers himſelf with that animal's ſkin, and placing an arm through the neck of it, counterfeits all the motions of this creature. By this

this artifice they approach it, and it frequently becomes an eaſy prey. It is alſo ſometimes taken by dogs and nets.

Whole flocks of oſtriches are bred by the inhabitants of Dara and Lybia, and are tamed without much trouble. But in this domeſtic ſtate they are not only prized for their feathers and their fleſh, but they are often ridden upon, and uſed as horſes. Moore aſſures us that he ſaw a man travelling upon an oſtrich at Joar, and Adamſon aſſerts, that at the factory of Podore he ſaw two young oſtriches, the ſtrongeſt of which ran ſwifter than the beſt Engliſh racer, though he carried two negroes on his back.

It is, however, generally agreed, that the oſtrich is a very ſtupid bird, and ſoon forgetful of its young. As an inſtance of its ſtupidity, it hides its head in the reeds when purſued, thinking itſelf thus totally covered from the ſight; and, as another proof, we are told, that they who go in purſuit of them, draw the ſkin of an oſtrich's neck on one hand, which is found a ſufficient lure to take them with the other. It is ſpoken of in the ſcripture as the ſymbol of cruelty and forgetfulneſs. See Lament. iv. 3. Job xxxix. 13, &c.

We learn from Xenophon, that Cyrus had horſes which could overtake the goat and the wild aſs, but none that could reach this creature; and that one thouſand golden ducats, or an hundred camels, was the ſtated price of a horſe that could keep equal pace with them.

The EMU.

THIS bird, which is alſo called the American oſtrich, is an inhabitant of the new continent; and travellers ſeem to have been more ſolicitous in proving its affinity to the oſtrich, than in mentioning thoſe peculiarities which diſtinguiſh it from all others of the feathered creation. It is chiefly found in Guiana, in the inland provinces of Braſil and Chili, and the vaſt foreſts bordering on the mouth of the river Plata.

The emu is ſecond in magnitude to the oſtrich; it is by much the largeſt bird in the new continent, and uſually meaſures ſix feet in height from the head to the ground. It is a bird very little known; and travellers have therefore given a looſe to their imaginations in deſcribing it, and each deſcription differs materially from another; inſomuch that, not having ſeen a ſpecimen of it, and being unable to aſcertain the accurate account, we ſhall forbear to ſpeak farther concerning it.

The CASSOWARY.

THE caſſowary, with regard to magnitude, is next to the emu. From the point of the bill to the extremity of the claws this bird is about five feet and an half long, and the legs are about two feet and an half high. The largeſt toe, including the claw, is five inches

long; and the claw alone of the leaſt toe is three inches and an half long. The wing is ſo ſmall as not to appear, being hid under the feathers of the back. The head, being without feathers, appears ſmall like that of an oſtrich, having on the top a creſt three inches high, like that of an helmet, and of an horny ſubſtance; but it does not cover the whole top, extending only from the middle of the crown to the bill. The feathers of the caſſowary are generally double, having two long ſhafts which grow out of a ſhort one that is fixed in the ſkin. The ſtem or ſhaft is flat, ſhining, black, and knotted below, with a beard proceeding from each knot. The beards at the end of the large feathers are perfectly black, and, towards the root, of a grey tawny colour, ſhorter, and like down, ſo that nothing appears except the ends, which are hard and black; the other part being entirely covered. The feathers on the rump are extremely thick, but in all other reſpects are like the reſt, excepting their being longer. The wings, when ſtripped of their feathers, are only three inches long.

The colour of the eye in this animal, which is a bright yellow, and the globe being above an inch and an half long in diameter, added to the peculiar oddity of the natural armour on the head, give it an air equally fierce and extraordinary. The neck is of a violet colour, inclining to that of ſlate, with ſpots of red in ſeveral places behind. The ſkin which covers the fore part of the breaſt, on which the

caſſowary

caſſowary leans and reſts, is hard, callous, and without feathers.

But, notwithſtanding it is thus formed for a life of hoſtility, and for its own defence, the caſſowary is a gentle inoffenſive animal. It never attacks others, and when attacked itſelf, inſtead of the bill it rather makes uſe of its legs, kicking like a horſe, or running againſt its purſuer, and, after beating him down, treading on him.

The manner of going of this animal is remarkably ſingular: inſtead of moving directly forward, it kicks up behind with one leg, and making a bound onward with the other, it travels with ſuch velocity, that the ſwifteſt racer would not be able to keep pace with it.

Upon the whole, the caſſowary may be ſaid to have the head of a warrior, the eye of a lion, the defence of a porcupine, and the fleetneſs of a courſer.

This bird, like the oſtrich, is extremely voracious, ſwallowing every thing that comes within the capacity of its gullet.

The eggs of the caſſowary are of a grey aſh colour, inclining to green; the largeſt are about fifteen inches round one way, and twelve the other. The ſhell, which is not very thick, is marked with a number of little tubercles of a deep green.

The natural climate of this animal ſeems to be the ſouthern parts of the moſt Eaſtern Indies, about the iſlands of Banda, Sumatra, Java, the Molucca iſlands, and the correſponding parts of the continent.

THE

BRITISH MUSEUM
15 FEB 72

Dodo
Eagle

The DODO.

SWIFTNESS is generally the attribute of birds, but the dodo is not entitled to this diſtinction. Its body is almoſt round, maſſive, and covered with grey feathers; it has two ſhort, thick, clumſy legs, reſembling pillars, which ſeem to be but barely ſufficient to ſupport it. The neck is thick and purſy, and the head conſiſts of two great chaps, that open beyond the eyes, and are large, black, and prominent; ſo that when the animal extends its chaps, it appears to be all mouth. The bill is extremely long, and thick, and of a blueiſh white, ſharp at the end, and each chap crooked in oppoſite directions. It has a ſtupid and voracious phyſiognomy, which is increaſed by a bordering of feathers round the root of the beak, that appear like a cowl or hood, and finiſh this picture of ſtupid deformity.

The oſtrich, the caſſowary, and the dodo, are alike incapable of flying; but the two former ſupply that defect by their ſpeed in running: the dodo, however, is ſcarce able to ſupport its own weight, and moves forward with the utmoſt difficulty: it has wings indeed, which are cloathed with ſhort aſh-coloured feathers, but they are too ſhort to enable it to fly. It has a tail too, furniſhed with a few ſmall curled feathers; but this tail is miſplaced and diſproportioned.

The dodo is a native of the iſle of France; its fleſh is good and wholeſome eating, and it is

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ſaid that three or four dodos are ſufficient to dine an hundred ſailors.

THE GOLDEN EAGLE.

THIS is the largeſt and nobleſt of the eagle kind; it weighs about twelve pounds, its length is three feet, and the extent of its wings is about ſeven feet four inches: the bill, which is three inches long, is of a deep blue colour, and the eye of an hazel colour; the ſight and ſenſe of ſmelling are very acute: the head and neck are coyered with narrow ſharp-pointed feathers, and of a dark brown colour, edged with tawny; but, in very old birds, thoſe on the crown of the head turn grey. The whole body is of a dark brown, and the feathers on the back are finely clouded with a deeper ſhade of the ſame: the wings, when not extended, reach to the end of the tail: the quill feathers are of a chocolate colour, and the ſhafts white: the tail is of a deep brown, irregularly barred and ſpotted with an obſcure aſh-colour, and generally white at the roots of the feathers; the legs are yellow, ſhort, and very ſtrong, being three inches in circumference, and feathered down to the very feet: the toes are covered with large ſcales, and armed with moſt formidable claws, the middle of which are two inches long.

This ſpecies is found in the mountainous parts of Ireland, where it breeds in the loftieſt

tieſt cliffs; it is ſometimes ſeen in Caernarvonſhire, and there are inſtances of their having bred upon Snowdon hills. It uſually lays three or four eggs, though ſeldom more than two are prolific.

The eagle may be conſidered among birds as the lion among quadrupeds: they are both ſovereigns over their fellows of the foreſt, and, equally magnanimous, diſdain all petty plunder, purſuing only ſuch animals as are worthy the conqueſt. However hungry he may be, he never ſubmits to carrion; and, when ſatisfied, never returns to the ſame carcaſe, but leaves it for other animals leſs delicate than himſelf.

Like the lion, he keeps the deſert to himſelf alone; it being equally extraordinary to ſee two pair of eagles on the ſame mountain, as two lions in the ſame foreſt; and by keeping thus ſeparate they find a more ample ſupply. Theſe animals have a ſtrong ſimilitude in other reſpects; the eyes of both are ſparkling, and nearly of the ſame colour; their claws are of the ſame form, and their cry equally loud and terrifying. Formed for war, they are enemies of all ſociety, and are equally fierce, proud, and incapable of being tamed. Infinite art and patience are required to tame an eagle; and even when taken young, and brought under by long aſſiduity, it is ſtill but a dangerous domeſtic, and ſeldom is brought to have an attachment for its feeder.

Of all animals the eagle flies higheſt; and

from thence the ancients have given him the epithet of the Bird of Heaven.

The eagle has always been reckoned the king of birds; and Bochart tells us, that it lives a century, and increaſes in bulk to its death.

The voracity of this bird is ſo great, that he ravages all the neighbouring places, which are ſcarce ſufficient to furniſh him with prey neceſſary for his ſupport. Hence, as we have already obſerved, two eagles are not to be found in the ſame quarter. They are not contented with the larger birds, as hens, geeſe, and cranes, but purſue rabbits, hares, lambs and kids, which they lift from the ground and carry off. As the eagle lives only on the fleſh of ſuch animals as he kills, ſo he quenches his thirſt with their blood, and never drinks water but when he is ſick. It is ſaid, that the ſwan is the only bird which can reſiſt him, and that frequently he does it with ſucceſs.

Sharpneſs of ſight is a quality of the eagle which ſets him above all other birds: he ſeems even to be ſenſible of that advantage: and, to preſerve it in his ſpecies, as ſoon as his young begin to have ſtrength, he turns them towards the ſun, and makes them fix their eyes upon it: if any one cannot bear the heat and force of the rays, he chaſes him from the neſt, as if he judged him unworthy of his protection and aſſiſtance, but attaches himſelf to the reſt with a remarkable affection; he is ſeen fluttering in various ways round his neſt to teach them

them to fly; he takes them afterwards upon his back, in ſuch a manner that the fowler cannot hurt the young, without piercing through the body of the old one; quits them in the middle of his courſe in order to prove them; and if he perceives that they cannot as yet ſupport themſelves alone, and that they are in danger of falling, he darts himſelf below them with the greateſt rapidity, and receives them between his wings.

It is ſaid that the reaſon why eagles, who have not the fibres of their eyes ſtronger than other animals, can look ſtedfaſtly on the ſun, and ſupport its fierceſt rays, is, becauſe they have two eye-lids: one with which they ſhut their eyes entirely; the other, which is thinner, they draw over them when they look upon a luminous object, which renders the glaring light much more ſupportable. However this be, it is certain, that the eagle riſes to a prodigious height. To inſtinct he owes the renewal of his ſtrength and youth, in which the learned, and even the critics themſelves are agreed; every ten years his feathers become heavy and leſs proper for flight: he then makes an effort, and approaches nearer the ſun than uſual; and after being exceſſively heated, he plunges immediately into the ſea, his feathers fall off, and new ones ſupply their place, which reſtore him to his priſtine ſtrength.

The neſt of the eagle is uſually built in the moſt inacceſſible cliffs of rocks; but this is not always the caſe: the ſea eagle and the oſprey, for example, live principally upon fiſh,

and consequently build their nests on the sea shore, and by the sides of rivers, on the ground among reeds. They catch their prey by darting down upon them from above; the Italians therefore call them Aquila Piombina, or the Leaden Eagle, comparing their violent descent on their prey to the fall of lead into water.

THE BALD EAGLE.

THE body of the bald eagle is brown; the head, neck, and tail white, and the upper part of the legs brown. It is an inhabitant of North Carolina, and is remarkable for habits peculiar to itself. These eagles breed in that country all the year round; and, as soon as the young are just covered with down, and a kind of white woolly feathers, the female eagles lay again. These eggs are left to be hatched by the warmth of the young eaglets that continue in the nest; the flight of one brood always making room for the next, that are but just hatched. These birds fly heavily, and cannot overtake their prey like the rest of their tribe. They therefore generally attend upon fowlers in the winter; and, when any birds are wounded, they are sure to be seized by them, though they may escape the fowler. This animal will also frequently steal young pigs, and carry them alive to the nest, which is a filthy place, composed of twigs, sticks, and rubbish, and generally almost full of half-eaten bones and putrid flesh.

The SEA EAGLE.

THIS bird is found in ſeveral parts of Great Britain and Ireland, and has generally been confounded with the golden eagle, to which it bears ſome reſemblance. The colours of the head, neck, and body, are the ſame with the golden eagle, but much lighter, the tawny part in this predominating; in ſize it is far ſuperior; the bill is larger, more hooked, and more arched; underneath grow ſeveral ſhort ſtrong hairs or briſtles, forming a ſort of beard; the legs are ſtrong, thick, and of a yellow colour, and feathered but little below the knees, which is an invariable diſtinction between this and the golden eagle: this nakedneſs of the legs, however, is of no ſmall convenience to a bird that preys among the waters. Writers all agree that this eagle feeds principally on fiſh, which it ſeizes as they are ſwimming near the ſurface.

The BLACK EAGLE.

THE black eagle is about half the ſize of the golden eagle; the body in general is blackiſh; the head and neck mixed with red; on the middle of the back between the wings there is a large white ſpot mixed with red feathers, which, approaching the rump, become entirely of a darkiſh red. The feathers on the wings nearly reſemble thoſe of a common buzzard.

THE OSPREY.

THIS bird frequents rivers, lakes, and the ſea ſhore; it makes its neſt among reeds, and lays three or four white eggs of an elliptical form, ſomewhat leſs than thoſe of a hen. It principally feeds on fiſh, which it ſeizes in the ſame manner that the ſea eagle does, not by ſwimming, but by precipitating itſelf on them. Turner ſays it alſo preys on coots and other water-fowl.

The bird we are about to deſcribe was a female: it was twenty-three inches long, and weighed ſixty-two ounces; the breadth was five feet four inches; the wings, when cloſed, reached beyond the end of the tail, which conſiſts of twelve feathers: the head was ſmall and flattiſh; the crown white, marked with oblong duſky ſpots; the cheeks, chin, breaſt, and belly were white, except that the laſt was ſpotted with a dull yellow; a bar of brown extends from the corner of each eye, along the ſides of the neck, pointing towards the wing. The legs were very ſhort, thick, and ſtrong; their length being only two inches and a quarter, and their circumference two inches: their colour was a pale blue, the outward-toe turned eaſily backwards: and, what claims our attention, the claw belonging to it is larger than that of the inner toe; in which particular it differs from every other bird of prey; but it ſeems peculiarly neceſſary to this kind, for the better ſecuring its ſlippery prey.

THE

THE CROWNED EAGLE.

THIS curious bird of the eagle ſpecies is a native of Africa, and is about a third part leſs than the larger ſort of eagles which we ſee in Europe, but appears to be ſtrong and bold like them. The bill is of a duſky brown colour; the corners of the mouth are cleft in pretty deep under the eyes, and are of a yellowiſh colour; the circles round the eyes are of a reddiſh orange colour; the fore part of the head, the ſpace between the eyes, and the throat, are covered with white feathers, with ſmall black ſpots; the hinder part of the head and neck, the back and wings, are of a dark brown or blackiſh colour; the tail is of a brown colour, barred acroſs with black: the belly and covert feathers under the tail are white, ſpotted with black; the thighs and legs down to the feet are covered with white feathers, beautifully ſpotted with round black ſpots; the feet and claws are very ſtrong; the feet are covered with ſcales of a bright orange colour; the claws are black. It raiſes the feathers on the hinder part of the head in the form of a creſt or crown, from which it takes its name.

Like the other birds of the ſame name and ſpecies, the crowned eagle is remarkable for its voracity and ſharpneſs of ſight.

THE COMMON EAGLE.

THE common eagle is of a brown colour, the head and upper part of the neck inclining to red; the feathers of the tail are white, except that they grow blackiſh towards the ends; the four outer ones on each ſide are of an aſh colour, and the legs are cloathed with feathers of a reddiſh brown.

THE EAGLE OF PONDICHERRY.

THE eagle of Pondicherry is of a cheſnut colour, except that the ſix outward tail feathers are half black.

THE CONDOR, OR CONDOUR, OF AMERICA.

THE condor, or condour, is a native of South America. Captain Strong, as Sir Hans Sloane informs us in the Philoſophical Tranſactions, No. 208, ſhot one of them on the coaſt of Chili, not far from Mocha, an iſland in the South Sea. It was ſhot, ſitting on a cliff, by the ſea ſide; and was ſixteen feet from wing to wing extended.

Nature hath denied them the talons which are given to the eagle, their feet being tipped with claws like a hen; however their beak is ſtrong enough to tear off the hide, and rip up the

Pondicherry Eagle

King of the Vultures

the bowels of an ox! Two of them will attempt a cow or a bull, and will devour him; and it hath often happened that one of them hath aſſaulted boys of ten or twelve years of age, and hath eaten them. The Spaniſh inhabitants on the coaſt of Chili told Capt. Strong, that they were ever in dread leſt this rapacious bird ſhould prey upon their children. And it is ſaid, that the Americans hold out to it, as a lure, the figure of a child, made of a very glutinous clay, upon which it deſcends with exceſſive rapidity, and ſtrikes its pounces into it ſo deep, that it cannot after that get away.

Their colour is a mixture of black and white, and the tail is like a magpie's: they have on the fore part of their heads a comb, not pointed or toothed like that of a cock, but rather even, in the form of a razor. When they come to alight from the air, they make ſuch a prodigious noiſe, as is enough to aſtoniſh or make a man deaf. It never is ſeen in foreſts, on account of the extreme length of its wings, becauſe it would not have room to fly; but it frequents the ſea ſhores, and the banks of rivers, where it is likely to meet with prey.

Some are of opinion that the condor is not confined to America only; the great bird called the rock, deſcribed by Arabian writers*, and ſo much exaggerated in fable, is ſuppoſed to be a ſpecies of the condor. The great bird of Tarnaſſar in the Eaſt Indies, and the vulture of Senegal, which carries off children, are probably

* See Arabian Nights Entertainments.

no

no other than the bird we have been deſcribing. However this be, we are not to regret that it is hardly ever ſeen in Europe, as it appears to be one of the moſt formidable enemies of mankind. They chiefly inhabit the deſerts of Pachomac, where men ſeldom venture to travel. Thoſe wild regions are alone ſufficient to inſpire a ſecret horror; the foreſts are vocal with the roaring of wild beaſts, the hiſſing of ſerpents, and the mountains are rendered terrible by the condor.

THE VULTURE.

VULTURES are eaſily diſtinguiſhed from all thoſe of the eagle kind, by the nakedneſs of their heads and necks, which have no other covering than a very ſlight down, or a few ſcattered hairs. Their eyes are more prominent; thoſe of the eagle being buried more in the ſocket; their claws are ſhorter and leſs hooked. They are different from all other birds of prey, in having the inſide of their wing covered with a thick down, which is converted into a very warm and comfortable kind of fur, and frequently expoſed to ſale in the Aſiatic markets.

In Egypt the vulture is of ſingular ſervice. In the neighbourhood of Grand Cairo there are large flocks of them, which no perſon is permitted to deſtroy; they devour all the carrion and filth of that great city, which might otherwiſe tend to corrupt and putrefy the air. They accompany the wild dogs of the country, and fre-

frequently feed with them very deliberately upon a dead carcaſe.

Cateſby informs us that they are attracted by carrion at a very great diſtance. "It is pleaſant," ſays he, "to behold them when they are eating, and diſputing for their prey. An eagle generally preſides at their entertainments, and makes them all keep their diſtance till he has done. They then fall to with an excellent appetite; and their ſenſe of ſmell is ſo exquiſite, that the inſtant a carcaſe drops, we may ſee the vultures floating in the air from all quarters, and come ſouſing on their prey." Some have imagined that they eat nothing which has life; but this is only when they are unable to overcome their prey; for when they diſcover lambs, they ſhew no mercy; and ſerpents are their ordinary food.

In the Braſils, where vultures are found in great abundance, when they diſcover a carcaſe which they have liberty to tear at their eaſe, they eat ſo voraciouſly that they are unable to fly. At all times, indeed, they are birds of a ſlow flight, and cannot raiſe themſelves from the ground; but, when they are overfed, they are entirely helpleſs; however, if they are purſued, they ſoon get rid of their burthen; for they can at any time vomit up what they have eaten, and then they fly off with greater facility.

Men, who have been preſſed by hunger, have been tempted to taſte the fleſh of the vulture; but it is lean, ſtringy, nauſeous, and unſavoury; it ſmells and taſtes of the carrion by which

which it was nouriſhed, and ſends forth a ſtench that is inſupportable. Theſe birds uſually lay two eggs at a time, and produce but once a year. They make their neſts in inacceſſible cliffs, and in places ſo remote that they are ſeldom found. Thoſe in Europe principally reſide in the places where they breed, ſeldom venturing on the plains, except when the ſnow and ice in their native retreats have baniſhed all living animals but themſelves. In England they are very rarely ſeen.

THE KING OF THE VULTURES.

THE king of the vultures is a native of America, and is ſomewhat larger than a Turkey cock. It is chiefly remarkable for the odd formation of the ſkin of the head and neck, which is bare; the ſkin, which is of an orange colour, ariſes from the baſe of the bill, and extends on each ſide to the head, from whence it proceeds like an indented comb, and falls on either ſide, according to the motion of the head. A ſcarlet-coloured ſkin ſurrounds the eyes, and the iris has the colour and luſtre of pearl. The head and neck are deſtitute of feathers, having a fleſh-coloured ſkin on the upper part, a fine ſcarlet behind the head, and a duſkier coloured ſkin before; farther down behind the head ariſes a tuft of black down, from whence iſſues a wrinkled ſkin, that extends beneath the throat on each ſide, which is of a browniſh colour, mixed with blue and reddiſh

behind; below, upon the naked part of the neck, a collar is formed of ſoft longiſh feathers of a deep aſh colour, which ſurround the neck, and cover the breaſt before. The bird ſometimes withdraws its whole neck, and frequently a part of its head into this collar, and appears to view as if it had withdrawn the neck into the body. It is ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed by theſe marks from all others of the vulture kind; and it cannot be denied that the king of the vultures is the moſt beautiful of all this deformed family; but neither its habits nor inſtincts vary from the reſt of the cowardly, indolent, and filthy tribe.

THE FALCON.

FALCONRY, as a ſport, is now given over in this kingdom, though it was the principal amuſement of our anceſtors. A perſon of rank ſcarcely ever appeared without his hawk in his hand, which in old paintings is the criterion of nobility. In thoſe days it was thought ſufficient for the ſons of noblemen to wind the horn, and to carry their hawk with a grace; ſtudy and learning being then confined to the children of meaner people.

The expence which attended this ſport was incredible: among the Welch princes, the king's falconer was the fourth officer in the ſtate; but, notwithſtanding his honourable appointment, he was permitted to take no more than three draughts of beer from his horn, leſt he ſhould get intoxicated and neglect his duty. In the

reign of James the Firſt, Sir Thomas Monſon gave a thouſand pounds for a caſt of hawks. It is not therefore ſurprizing that the laws were formerly extremely rigorous to preſerve a pleaſure that was carried to ſuch an extravagant pitch. This diverſion was in ſuch high eſteem, not only in England, but among the great all over Europe, that Frederick, one of the emperors of Germany, thought it no indignity to write a treatiſe upon hawking. The art of gunning indeed was but little practiſed in the earlier times, therefore the hawk was valuable, as well for its affording diverſion, as for its ſupplying the delicacies of the table, that could not otherwiſe be obtained.

The generous race of hawks which have been taken into the ſervice of man, are diſtinguiſhed from the baſer kinds, ſuch as kites, ſparrow-hawks, and buzzards, by the peculiar length of their wings, which reach almoſt as low as the tail. From this length of their wings, they are ſwifter to purſue their game; from a confidence in their ſwiftneſs, they are bolder to attack it; and, from an innate generoſity, they have an attachment to their feeder, and conſequently are more docile and tractable than birds of a baſer kind.

The hawk may be taught to fly at any game whatſoever; but falconers have generally confined their purſuit to ſuch animals only as yield them profit in the capture, or pleaſure in the purſuit. The hare, the partridge, and the quail, repay the trouble of taking them; but the falcon's purſuit of the heron, the kite, or the

the woodlark, afford the moſt agreeable diverſion; when they ſee themſelves threatened by the approach of the hawk, they immediately take to the ſkies. Inſtead of flying directly forward, as moſt other birds do, they fly almoſt perpendicularly upward, while their eager purſuer endeavours to riſe above them; they both gradually diminiſh from the gazing ſpectator below, till they are totally loſt in the clouds; but they deſcend ſhortly after, and are ſeen ſtruggling together, the one uſing every effort of rapacious attack, and the other deſperately defending itſelf. A period is preſently put to the unequal combat; the falcon comes off victorious, and the other, killed or diſabled, becomes the prey of either the bird or the ſportſman.

Other birds generally fly ſtraight forward, by which the ſportſman loſes ſight of the chace, and is in danger of loſing his falcon alſo, therefore they are not much purſued. The purſuit of the lark by a couple of merlins is conſidered as excellent diverſion: one of them ſoars above the lark, while the other, lying low for the beſt advantage, waits the ſucceſs of its companion's labours; thus while the one ſtoops to ſtrike its prey, the other ſeizes it as it deſcends.

The Norway hawks were by ſportſmen conſidered as ſuperior to all others.

The GYR FALCON.

THIS elegant ſpecies exceeds all other falcons in ſize, and approaches nearly to the magnitude of an eagle. The bill is yellow, and very much hooked; the throat is of a pure white; and the whole plumage is of the ſame colour, except that it is marked with duſky lines, ſpots, or bars. On the head, breaſt, and belly, there are narrow duſky lines, thinly ſcattered, and pointing downwards; the feathers of the back and wings are marked with black ſpots in the ſhape of an heart, and the middle feathers of the tail with a few bars. The thighs are cloathed with long feathers of a pure white. The legs are yellow, and feathered a little below the knees. This falcon is ſometimes found entirely white: when falconry was in faſhion, it was uſed for the nobleſt game, ſuch as cranes and herons.

The PEREGRINE FALCON.

THE ſize of this bird is equal to that of the moor buzzard; the bill is ſtrong, ſhort, and very much hooked; blue at the baſe, and black at the point. The feathers on the forehead are whitiſh; the crown of the head is black intermixed with blue, and the hind part of the neck black; the back, ſcapulars, and coverts of the wings, are elegantly barred with deep black and blue. The quill feathers are duſky, marked with

Gyrfalcon

Peregrine Falcon

THE GYR FALCON.

THIS elegant ſpecies exceeds all other falcons in ſize, and approaches nearly to the magnitude of an eagle. The bill is yellow, and very much hooked; the throat is of a pure white; and the whole plumage is of the ſame colour, except that it is marked with duſky lines, ſpots, or bars. On the head, breaſt, and belly, there are narrow duſky lines, thinly ſcattered, and pointing downwards; the feathers of the back and wings are marked with black ſpots in the ſhape of an heart, and the middle feathers of the tail with a few bars. The thighs are cloathed with long feathers of a pure white. The legs are yellow, and feathered a little below the knees. This falcon is ſometimes found entirely white: when falconry was in faſhion, it was uſed for the nobleſt game, ſuch as cranes and herons.

THE PEREGRINE FALCON.

THE ſize of this bird is equal to that of the moor buzzard; the bill is ſtrong, ſhort, and very much hooked; blue at the baſe, and black at the point. The feathers on the forehead are whitiſh; the crown of the head is black intermixed with blue, and the hind part of the neck black; the back, ſcapulars, and coverts of the wings, are elegantly barred with deep black and blue. The quill feathers are duſky, marked with

Gyrfalcon

Peregrine Falcon

Spotted Falcon

Lanner

Goshawk
Falcon Gentil

with elliptical white ſpots placed tranſverſely; the tail is barred with ſeveral ſtrokes of duſky and blue; the throat is white; the fore parts of the neck and upper part of the breaſt white, tinged with yellow; the reſt of the breaſt, belly, and thighs, is white inclining to grey, and croſſed with duſky ſtrokes pointed in the middle. The feathers of the tail are of an equal length, beautifully barred with blue and black. This ſpecies was ſhot in Northamptonſhire.

THE FALCON GENTLE.

THE falcon gentle is ſmaller than the peregrine falcon, with a ſmaller and a rounder head, and a ſhorter back, but exactly reſembles it in ſhape. The head is flattiſh on the top. It has fine large black eyes, encircled with fine yellow rings. The upper part, and the ſides of the head, are of a duſky brown, ſpotted with a fine black. The neck is ſurrounded with a light yellow ring, not unlike a collar, and a black line on each ſide extends from the corner of the mouth to the middle of the throat. The breaſt, thighs, and belly, are of a fine yellow colour, with ſmall black ſtreaks pointing downwards. The wings, back, and upper ſide of the tail, are of a duſky black, and, when cloſed, reach almoſt to the end of the tail.

As it evidently appears, from the authority of Mr. Pennant and others, that the common falcon, the falcon gentle, and the haggard, are one and the ſame bird, we ſhall not trouble our

readers with unneceſſary repetitions, which would only tend to confuſe them.

THE TUNIS, OR BARBARY FALCON.

[See the plate, "*Spotted Falcon.*"]

THIS is a ſprightly majeſtic bird, with a large black beak, and open yellow noſtrils. The eyes are of a dark hazel colour, encircled with yellow rings. The top of the head is of a pale aſh colour, beautifully ſpotted with black; and the feathers on the back, ſhoulders, and part of the wings, are nearly of the ſame colour, and equally ornamented with black ſpots. The breaſt, belly, and thighs, are yellowiſh, inclining to white; the upper part of the breaſt being a little ſhaded with blue. The wings are very long, reaching, when cloſed, almoſt to the end of the tail, which is of a blueiſh colour, with ſix or ſeven duſky-coloured ſtreaks running acroſs it. Part of the thighs and the lower part of the belly are marked with curious long red ſpots, reſembling ermine.

THE LANNER.

THIS ſpecies breeds in Ireland: the bird here deſcribed was caught in a decoy in Lincolnſhire, purſuing ſome wild ducks under the nets. Mr. Pennant received the deſcription of it from Taylor White, Eſq. It is ſmaller than a buzzard; the crown of the head is of a brown and yellow

yellow clay colour: above each eye, to the hind part of the head, paſſes a broad white line; and beneath each a black mark pointing down; the throat is white; the breaſt tinged with dull yellow, and marked with brown ſpots pointing downwards; and the thighs and vent are ſpotted in the ſame manner; the back and coverts of the wings are of a deep brown, but lighter towards the edges; the quill feathers are duſky; the inner webs marked with oval ruſt-coloured ſpots, and the tail is ſpotted like the wings; the legs, which are of a blueiſh caſt, are ſhort and ſtrong, which, according to Mr. Willoughby, are the characters of the lanner.

THE GOSHAWK,

THIS bird is larger than the common buzzard, and of a longer and more elegant form: the bill is blue towards the baſe, and black at the tip; the ſkin at the baſe of the bill is of a yellowiſh green; over each eye is a long white line, and on each ſide of the neck a bed of broken white; the head, the hind part of the neck, the back, and wings, are of a deep brown colour, and, when cloſed, do not reach ſo far as the end of the tail; the breaſt and belly are white, beautifully marked with numerous tranſverſe bars of black and white; the tail is long, and of a browniſh aſh colour, marked with four or five duſky bars placed remote from each other. The goſhawk was much eſteemed among falconers, and taught principally to purſue cranes, geeſe, pheaſants, and partridges.

THE

The KITE.

THE kite may be diſtinguiſhed from all the reſt of this tribe by his forky tail, and his ſlow floating motion, being almoſt for ever on the wing. He appears to reſt himſelf upon the boſom of the air, and not to make the ſmalleſt effort in flying.

The kite lives chiefly upon accidental carnage, as almoſt every bird in the air is able to eſcape him. He may therefore be conſidered as an inſidious thief who only prowls about, and, when he perceives a ſmall bird wounded, or a young chicken that has ſtrayed too far from its mother, inſtantly ſeizes the hour of calamity; and, like a famiſhed glutton, deſtroys it without mercy. His hunger indeed ſometimes urges him to ſeeming acts of deſperation. A kite is frequently ſeen floating round and round for ſome time to mark a clutch of chickens, and then on a ſudden to dart like lightning upon the little unreſiſting animal, and carry it off, while the hen laments, and the boys caſt ſtones in vain, to ſcare it from its plunder.

This bird uſually breeds in large foreſts or woody mountainous countries; it lays two, and ſometimes three eggs, which are white, with dirty yellow ſpots. The motion of the kite in the air is ſo ſmooth and even as hardly to be perceptible. It is obſerved by Lord Bacon, that when kites fly high, it portends fine and dry weather.

The

Buzzard

Moor Buzzard

The length of this ſpecies is twenty-ſeven inches, the breadth about five feet, and the weight forty-four ounces; the bill is two inches long, and very much hooked at the end; the ſkin at the baſe of the bill is yellow, and the head and chin of a light grey, though ſometimes white, marked with oblong ſtreaks of black; the neck and breaſt are of a tawny red, but the middle of the feathers are black. The ſpots are leſs numerous on the belly and thighs, and under the tail they almoſt diſappear. The back is brown, the firſt five quill feathers are black, and on the inner webs of the others are large blotches of white; the coverts of the wings are varied with tawny black and white; and the tail is of a tawny red; the outer feathers on each ſide being of a darker hue than the reſt. The thighs are cloathed with very long feathers, and the legs are yellow and ſtrong. Theſe birds, however, ſometimes differ in their colours, ſome having been ſeen that were entirely tawny.

THE COMMON BUZZARD.

OF all birds of the hawk kind, the kite is the beſt known, but the buzzard is the moſt common in England. It is a ſluggiſh inactive bird, and ſometimes remains whole days together perched upon the ſame bough. He may be conſidered rather as an aſſaſſin than a purſuer, and lives more upon frogs, mice, and inſects, which he can eaſily ſeize, than upon birds which

which he is obliged to follow. His ſummer food is obtained by robbing the neſts of other birds, and ſucking their eggs. He reſembles the owl in his countenance more than any other rapacious bird of day. The ſtupidity of his diſpoſition is pourtrayed in his figure; and ſo little is he capable of receiving inſtruction from man, that it is common to a proverb to give to a ſtupid perſon the name of buzzard.

This bird breeds in large woods, and uſually builds on an old crow's neſt, which it enlarges and lines with wool and other ſoft materials: it lays two or three eggs, which are ſometimes entirely white, and ſometimes ſpotted with yellow. If the hen buzzard ſhould happen to be killed, the cock will hatch and bring up the young. The young accompany the old ones for ſome little time after they have quitted the neſt, which is a remarkable circumſtance; for all other birds of prey drive away their brood as ſoon as they can fly. This bird is ſubject to ſome variety in its colours; but uſually the breaſt is of a yellowiſh white, ſpotted with oblong ruſt-coloured ſpots, pointing downwards: the back of the head and neck, and the coverts of the wings, are of a deep brown, edged with a pale ruſt colour; the feathers on the ſhoulders and the ſides of the back are brown, but white toward the roots; the middle of the back is covered only with a thick down. The ends of the quill feathers are duſky; their lower exterior ſides aſh-coloured, and their interior ſides blotched with darker and lighter ſhades of the ſame; the tail is barred with aſh colour and black,

black, the bar near the tip being black, and much broader than any of the reſt; the tip itſelf is whitiſh.

The length of this ſpecies is about twenty-two inches, the breadth, with the wings extended, fifty-two, and the weight about thirty-two ounces.

THE MOOR BUZZARD.

THOUGH this bird is called in Latin *milvus*, or kite, it is more properly a buzzard, not having a forked tail, the diſtinguiſhing mark of the kite. It frequents heaths, moors, and marſhy places, and never ſoars like other hawks, but uſually ſits on the ground, or on ſmall buſhes. It makes its neſt in the midſt of a tuft of graſs or ruſhes, and lays two or three eggs. It is a fierce voracious creature, and makes great havock among rabbits, young wild ducks, and other water fowl. The uſual length of this bird is twenty-one inches; the breadth, with the wings extended, four feet three inches; the tail is black, and the ſkin at the baſe of it yellow; the irides are alſo yellow. The whole bird, the head only excepted, is of a chocolate brown, tinged with ruſt colour. On the head is a large yellowiſh ſpot, and ſome have been ſeen whoſe heads were entirely white; others again have been found with a whitiſh ſpot on the coverts of the wings; but theſe are only to be conſidered as varieties. The legs of this bird, which are long and ſlender, are covered with

with feathers a little below the knee; and, in general, the make of the body is longer and leſs bulky than that of other birds of prey. The uniform colour of its plumage, and the great length and ſlenderneſs of its legs, diſtinguiſh it from all other hawks.

THE SPARROW HAWK.

THE difference in ſize between the male and female ſparrow-hawk is very diſproportionate: the former uſually weighing about five ounces, the latter nine ounces; the length of the male is generally about twelve inches, and the breadth twenty-three; the length of the female fifteen inches, and the breadth twenty-ſix.

Like other birds of the hawk kind, theſe vary greatly in their colours; in ſome, the back, head, coverts of the wings, and tail, are of a deep blueiſh grey; in others, of a deep brown, edged with a ruſty red. The quill feathers are duſky, with black bars on their outer webs, and ſpotted with white on the lower part of their inner webs. On the tail, which is a deep aſh colour, there are fine broad black bars, and the tip is white; the breaſt and belly are of a cream colour, adorned with tranſverſe waved bars, of a deep brown in ſome, and orange-coloured in others. The ſkin at the baſe of the bill, the irides, and the legs, are yellow. The colours of the female are different from thoſe of the male: the head is of a deep brown, the back and coverts of the wings

are

are browniſh mixed with dove colour; the tail is of a brighter dove colour; the waved lines on the breaſt are more numerous than thoſe on the breaſt of the male, and the breaſt is whiter.

This is the moſt pernicious hawk we have in England, and makes great depredations among pigeons and partridges. It builds in high rocks, large ruinous buildings, and hollow trees. It lays four eggs, which are white, encircled with red ſpecks near the larger end. Mr. Willoughby places the ſparrow-hawk among the ſhort-winged hawks, or ſuch whoſe wings will not reach the end of the tail when cloſed.

THE MERLIN.

THOUGH ſmaller than any of the hawk kind, and not much larger than a thruſh, the merlin diſplays a degree of courage that renders him formidable to birds of ſix times his magnitude. The bill is of a blueiſh lead colour, and round the neck, a little below the head, there is a ring of a yellowiſh white: the back and upper part of the body are of a deep bluiſh aſh colour, adorned with ſtreaks and ſpots of iron grey, and edged with the ſame; the quill feathers are almoſt black, marked with reddiſh ſpots; the under coverts of the wings are brown, embelliſhed with round white ſpots. The tail, which is about five inches long, is croſſed with alternate bars of duſky and reddiſh clay colour; the breaſt and belly are of a cream colour, with oblong brown ſpots, pointing

downwards; the legs are yellow, and the wings, when cloſed, reach within an inch and an half of the end of the tail. This and the ſparrow-hawk were often trained for hawking; and this ſpecies, ſmall as it is, was inferior to none in point of ſpirit. It was uſed principally for taking partridges, which it was remarkable for killing by a ſingle ſtroke on the neck. The female, as in other birds of prey, is larger than the male. The merlin flies low, and is frequently ſeen about the roads, ſkimming from one ſide of the hedges to the other in ſearch of prey.

THE GREATER BUTCHER BIRD.

THE greater butcher bird is about the ſize of a blackbird: its bill, which is black, is about an inch long, and hooked at the end. To this mark, together with its carnivorous appetite, it is indebted for its rank among the rapacious birds; but it will feed indiſcriminately upon fleſh and inſects: its appetite for the former, however, is moſt prevalent, for when it can obtain fleſh, it always gives it the preference to inſects.

It is aſtoniſhing to behold with what intrepidity this little creature will engage with the pie, the crow, and other birds conſiderably larger than itſelf. The butcher bird not only fights upon the defenſive, but frequently begins the attack, and always with advantage; particularly when the male and female unite to protect their

Eagle Owl
Butcher Bird

their young, and to drive away the more powerful birds of rapine.

The moſt redoubtable birds of prey are upon friendly terms with the butcher bird; the kite, the buzzard, and the crow, ſeem rather to fear it than endeavour to offend it. Nothing better diſplays the reſpect paid to the claim of courage, than to ſee this little bird, ſo contemptible in appearance, fly in company with the lanner, the falcon, and all the tyrants of the air, fearleſs of their power or their reſentment.

Small birds are its uſual food; it ſeizes them by the throat, and ſtrangles them in an inſtant. When it has thus killed the bird or inſect, it fixes them upon ſome neighbouring thorn, and then pulls them to pieces with its bill. When confined in a cage, they treat their food in much the ſame manner, ſticking it againſt the wires before they attempt to devour it. Nature has not furniſhed it with ſtrength ſufficient to tear its prey to pieces with its feet, as the hawks do, it is therefore obliged to have recourſe to this expedient.

During ſummer, ſuch of the butcher birds as conſtantly reſide here remain among the mountainous parts of the country; but in winter they deſcend into the plains, and nearer human habitations. The neſts of the larger kind are made on the higheſt trees, but thoſe of the ſmaller are built in buſhes in the fields and hedge-rows. They lay about ſix eggs, which are white, encircled at the larger end with a ring of browniſh red.

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This bird weighs about three ounces, and is about ten inches in length, and fourteen in breadth. The head is very large; the crown of the head, the back, and the coverts on the joints of the wings are aſh-coloured, the reſt of the coverts are black; each ſide of the head is white, with a broad black ſtroke croſſing from the bill to the hind part of the head; the throat, breaſt, and belly, are of a dirty white, and the legs are black.

THE RED BACKED BUTCHER BIRD.

THE male weighs about two ounces, the female rather more. The length of the male is ſeven inches and a half, and the breadth eleven inches; the head and the lower part of the back are of a fine light grey; a broad black ſtroke runs acroſs the eyes from the bill; the upper part of the back, and the coverts of the wings, are of a bright iron colour; the breaſt, belly, and ſides, are of an elegant bloſſom colour; the two middle feathers of the tail are the longeſt, and entirely black. The lower part of the others are white. In the female, the ſtroke acroſs the eye is of a reddiſh brown; the head of a dull ruſt colour, inclining to grey; the breaſt, belly, and ſides, of a cream colour, marked with ſemicircular duſky lines; the tail is of a deep brown, except that in both the male and female the exterior webs of the outward feathers on each ſide are white. Theſe birds

birds build their neſts in low buſhes, and lay about ſix eggs, which are white, encircled on the larger end with a ring of browniſh red.

THE LEAST BUTCHER BIRD.

THIS ſpecies is leſs than either of the former: it is found near the marſhes in London, and has been ſeen near Glouceſter. This is alſo a bird of prey, though not much larger than a tit-mouſe; an evident proof that an animal's courage or rapacity does not depend upon its ſize. The bill is yellow, ſhort, ſtrong, and very convex; the head is of a fine grey; and beneath each eye is a long triangular tuft of black feathers; the throat is white, and the middle of the breaſt fleſh-coloured; the ſides and thighs of a pale orange; the hind part of the neck and the back, of an orange bay; and the legs are black.

THE OWL.

HAVING deſcribed the rapacious animals of the day, we now come to a race equally cruel and rapacious, which add treachery to their ſavage diſpoſition, and carry on their depredations in the night.

Birds of the owl kind have a general mark by which they are diſtinguiſhed from others. Such is the formation of their eyes, that they

ſee better in the duſk than in open day-light; yet they do not, as ſome have imagined, ſee beſt in the darkeſt nights. Their viſion is beſt in the duſk of the evening, or the grey of the morning, when they are not incommoded with too much or too little light. It is then that they quit their ſolitary retreats to hunt or to ſurpriſe their prey: and their labours are, in general, attended with ſucceſs. Almoſt all other birds are then aſleep, or preparing for repoſe, and the moſt unguarded becomes the prey of theſe rapacious animals. But the nights when the moon ſhines are the times of their moſt ſucceſsful plunder.

As theſe birds are incapable of ſupporting the light of the day, or at leaſt of ſeeing and readily avoiding their danger at that time, they remain concealed in ſome obſcure retreat adapted to their gloomy diſpoſitions. Their uſual places of abode are the cavern of a rock, the darkeſt part of a hollow tree, the battlements of a ruined and unfrequented caſtle, or ſome obſcure hole in a farmer's barn or out-houſe.

At the approach of evening the owl ſallies forth, and ſkims rapidly up and down along the hedges. The barn-owl, indeed, as it lives chiefly upon mice, is contented to be more ſtationary; he places himſelf upon ſome ſhock of corn, or on the point of an old houſe, and watches in the dark with great vigilance and perſeverance.

Theſe birds have a moſt hideous note, which is often heard in the ſilence of midnight, and breaks the general pauſe with an horrid variation;

tion; and though this note is different in all, it is alarming and disagreeable in each of them. But while they are in pursuit of their prey, this note is seldom heard, lest they should disturb or forewarn those little animals they wish to surprize. When they have been successful, they soon return to their solitude; when they find but little game, they continue upon the watch still longer, and sometimes pursue so long that broad day breaks in upon them, and leaves them dazzled, bewildered, and at a distance from their retreat. Thus situated, they are obliged to take shelter in the first tree or hedge that presents itself; but it frequently happens that, with all their precaution to conceal themselves, when thus surprized by day-light, they are discovered by other birds, from whom they must expect no mercy. The blackbird, the thrush, the jay, the bunting, and the redbreast, all surround him, and employ their little arts of insult and abuse. The smallest and most contemptible of the owl's enemies are then the foremost to injure and torment him: they taunt him with their cries, flap him with their wings, and endeavour to appear courageous, as they are apprehensive of no danger: the wretched bird of night, not knowing where to attack, or where to fly, sits patiently and suffers all the indignities they offer: astonished and dizzy, he answers their insults by awkward and ridiculous gestures, by turning his head about, and rolling his eyes with an air of stupidity.

Some-

Sometimes, however, the little birds purſue their inſults with the ſame imprudent zeal with which the owl himſelf has purſued his depredations: they hunt him till the evening returns, which reſtoring his faculty of ſight, he makes his purſuers pay dear for the ſport which he had furniſhed them. Whatever miſchief one ſpecies of owl may do in the woods, the barn-owl makes a ſufficient recompence by its activity in deſtroying mice; a ſingle owl being ſuppoſed to be more ſerviceable than half a dozen cats in ridding the barn of its domeſtic vermin.

THE GREAT HORNED OWL.

[See the Plate, *Eagle Owl.*]

THIS bird, at the firſt view, appears as large as an eagle, but, when more cloſely obſerved, he will be found much ſmaller. His head, body, wings, and tail, are ſhorter; his head larger and thicker. His horns are compoſed of feathers, which riſe about two inches and an half high, and which he can erect or depreſs at pleaſure; his eyes are large and tranſparent, encircled with an orange-coloured iris; his ears are large and deep; the bill is black; the breaſt and belly are of a dull yellow, marked with ſlender brown ſtrokes, pointing downwards; the thighs are of the ſame colour, but unſpotted. The back and coverts of the wings are varied with deep brown and yellow; the quill feathers are of

of the ſame colour, with a broad bar of red near the ends of the exterior ones; the tail is marked with duſky and reddiſh bars, but appears aſh-coloured beneath; the feet are feathered down to the claws.

The great horned owl uſually breeds in the cavern of a rock, the hollow of a tree, or the turret of ſome ruined caſtle. Its neſt, which is almoſt three feet in diameter, is compoſed of ſticks, bound together by the fibrous roots of trees, and lined with leaves of trees. It uſually lays three eggs, which are as large as thoſe of a hen, and of a colour ſomewhat reſembling the bird itſelf. The young are very voracious, and the parents are aſſiduous and expert in providing food for them. This ſpecies is ſometimes found in the north of England, in Cheſhire, and in Wales.

THE LESSER HORNED OWL.

THE horns of this ſpecies are ſmall, conſiſting only of a ſingle feather each, which it can raiſe or depreſs at pleaſure; and, in a dead bird, theſe horns are hardly to be diſcovered. This kind is leſs common than the former; but it is found in the mountainous woody parts of our iſland; both are ſolitary birds, and avoid inhabited places.

The head of the leſſer horned owl is ſmall, reſembling that of an hawk; the bill is duſky; the circle of feathers which immediately ſurround

round the eyes is black: the larger circle is white, terminated with tawny; the feathers on the head, back, and coverts of the wings, are brown, edged with a dullish yellow; the breast and belly are of the same colour, with a few long narrow streaks of brown pointing downwards; the thighs, legs, and toes, are covered with yellow feathers; the quill feathers are dusky, barred with red; the tail is of a deep brown, embellished with a yellow circle on each side of the shaft of each feather; the tip of the tail is white.

This owl never makes a nest for itself, but is satisfied with the old nest of some other bird, which it has often been obliged to abandon. It lays four or five eggs. At first the young are all white, but they change colour in about a fortnight.

There is still a smaller kind of the horned owl, which is not much larger than a thrush, and has remarkably short horns.

THE WHITE OWL.

THE white owl is almost domestic, inhabiting, the greater part of the year, barns, hay-lofts, and other out-houses, and is extremely useful in clearing those places of mice. It quits its perch about twilight, and takes a regular circuit round the fields, skimming along the ground in quest of field mice, and then returns to its usual residence. In the breeding season

it

it takes to the woods. The elegant plumage of this bird ſufficiently compenſates for the uncouthneſs of its form; a circle of ſoft white feathers ſurrounds the eyes; the upper part of the body, the coverts, and the ſecondary feathers of the wings, are of a fine pale yellow, with two grey and two white ſpots on each ſide of the ſhafts; the exterior ſides of the quill feathers are yellow, the interior white, with four black ſpots on each ſide; the lower ſide of the body is entirely white; the interior ſides of the feathers of the tail are alſo white; the exterior are marked with ſome obſcure duſky bars; the legs are feathered to the feet, and the feet are covered with ſhort hairs. The uſual length of this bird is about fourteen inches, and the breadth three feet.

To theſe might be added the Brown Owl, the Little Owl, the Screech Owl, with blue eyes, and plumage of an iron grey, the Howlet, with duſky plumes and black eyes; but all this tribe of birds, however they may differ in their ſize and plumage, agree in the general characteriſtics of ſeeking their prey by night, and having their eyes formed for nocturnal viſion.

OF

Of BIRDS of the POULTRY KIND.

Birds of the poultry kind are ſuch as have white fleſh, and, in proportion to their head and limbs, have bulky bodies. They have ſhort ſtrong bills for picking up grain; their wings are ſhort and concave, and conſequently they cannot fly far. They lay a great many eggs, and lead their young brood abroad in queſt of food the very day they are hatched; the young, from the inſtructions of the mother, being able inſtantly to help itſelf. They uſually make their neſts on the ground. The toes of all theſe are united by a membrane as far as the firſt articulation, after which they are divided. We may therefore rank under this claſs the common cock, the peacock, the turkey, the pintada or guinea hen, the pheaſant, the buſtard, the grous, the partridge, and the quail. All theſe birds bear a ſtrong ſimilitude to each other, being equally granivorous, fleſhy, and delicate to the palate.

The COCK and HEN.

OF all other birds, the cock ſeems to have been firſt reclaimed from the foreſt, and taken to ſupply the accidental failure of the luxuries or neceſſaries of life. Having been longeſt under the care of man, he exhibits the greateſt number of varieties, not two birds of this

ſpecies being ſeen to reſemble each other exactly in form and plumage. The tail, which is ſo great an ornament to the generality of theſe birds, is entirely wanting in others. The toes are uſually four in animals of the poultry kind; but in one ſpecies of the cock, which abounds in the environs of Dorking in Surry, they amount to five. The feathers, which in moſt of them lie ſo ſleek and in ſuch beautiful order, are in a peculiar breed all inverted, and ſtand the wrong way. Nay, there is a ſpecies from Japan, which, inſtead of feathers, ſeem to be covered over with hair.

When the cock was firſt made domeſtic in Europe is not well aſcertained; but it is generally ſuppoſed, he came firſt into the weſtern world from Perſia.

When they were firſt propagated in Europe, there were diſtinctions which now no longer ſubſiſt. Thoſe with a reddiſh plumage were eſteemed by the ancients as invaluable, and the white ones were conſidered as utterly unfit for domeſtic purpoſes.

No animal in the world is more courageous than the cock, when oppoſed to one of his own ſpecies; and wherever refined and poliſhed manners have not taken place, cock-fighting is a principal diverſion. In India, China, the Philippine iſlands, and all over the Eaſt, it is the ſport and amuſement even of princes. In England it is declining daily, and in a ſhort time it will probably become the paſtime of

only the loweſt vulgar. It is certainly a moſt mean, ungenerous, and cruel amuſement.

The Hen ſeldom clutches a brood of chickens above once a ſeaſon, though it ſometimes happens that ſhe produces two. A domeſtic hen will lay upwards of two hundred eggs a year, when properly ſupplied with food and water; and ſhe will continue to lay when not impregnated by the male; but eggs of this kind, though equally proper for food and all other domeſtic purpoſes, can never by hatching be brought to produce a living animal.

The hen, if left to herſelf, forms but a very indifferent neſt; a hole ſcratched in the ground among a few buſhes, is the only preparation ſhe uſually makes for the ſeaſon of her patient expectation. Nature, almoſt exhauſted by its own fecundity, informs her of the proper time for hatching, which ſhe herſelf teſtifies by a clucking note, and by diſcontinuing to lay. Frugal houſewives, who find the eggs more profitable than the chickens, often practiſe arts to protract this clucking ſeaſon, and ſometimes entirely remove it. Their methods are theſe: when the hen begins to cluck, they ſtint her in her proviſions; and if that does not produce the deſired effect, they plunge her into cold water. This effectually retards her hatching, but it often produces a cold, and the poor bird dies under the operation.

If the hen were permitted to purſue her own inclinations, ſhe would ſeldom lay above twenty eggs in the ſame neſt, without attempting to hatch

hatch them; but if her eggs are removed in proportion as ſhe lays, ſhe ſtill continues to lay, vainly expecting to increaſe the number. When ſhe begins to ſet, her patience and perſeverance are incredible; ſhe continues immoveable for ſome days; and when forced from the neſt by the calls of hunger, ſhe quickly returns to her duty. During the time of her ſitting ſhe carefully turns her eggs, and often removes them to different ſituations; till at length, at the end of about three weeks, the young brood begin to give ſigns of their wiſhing to be releaſed from their confinement; and when, by the repeated efforts of their bill, they have broke themſelves a paſſage through the ſhell, the hen ſtill continues to ſit till they are all excluded. When the whole family are produced, ſhe leads them forth to inſtruct them in the art of providing for themſelves. Her affection and her pride ſeem then to alter her very nature, and render her an amiable bird. No longer cowardly or voracious, ſhe boldly ventures to attack any creature that ſhe ſuppoſes would do them any injury, and abſtains from every kind of food that her young can ſwallow. When marching at the head of her little troop, ſhe acts the commander, and has a variety of notes to ſummon them to their food, or to warn them of approaching danger.

The cock is allowed to be a ſhort-lived animal, but how long it would live if left to itſelf has not been aſcertained; it is probable that ten years would be the full extent.

The fleſh of a cock contains a great deal of oil and volatile ſalt, but it is not ſo much eſteemed as that of a hen, or rather of a pullet, becauſe it is drier, has a leſs agreeable taſte, and is harder of digeſtion. The fleſh of a pullet alſo contains a great deal of oil and volatile ſalt, is a moſt excellent aliment, and agrees with all ages and conſtitutions; but it is beſt ſuited to thoſe who are delicate, and lead ſedentary lives. Eggs are a common aliment, and are equally uſeful in health and ſickneſs. They digeſt eaſily, are very nouriſhing, abate the acrimony of the fluids, appeaſe coughs, and clear the voice. They are alſo good for the breath, and greatly exhilarate the ſpirits; but they ſhould not be boiled till they are hard.

THE BANTAM COCK AND HEN.

THE bantam cock is a ſmall, but a very courageous animal, and will fight any thing that oppoſes him. He has a reddiſh bill, fine red eyes, and a curious comb on the crown of the head. His ears are covered with a tuft of white feathers, and his neck and back with long ſtreaming feathers of orange colour, mixed with yellow. The breaſt and the lower part of the belly are black. It has long ſtiff feathers on the thighs, reaching conſiderably below the knees, and the legs are covered with ſmall feathers as far as the toes. The tail conſiſts of ſtiff black feathers, among which

which are two large ones hanging over the reſt in the form of a ſickle. It is now pretty common in England, though it takes its name from Bantam in the Eaſt Indies, from whence it was originally brought.

The Bantam hen is ſmall and beautiful; the bill is yellowiſh, and it has a ſmall white comb, with a few white hairs on the top of the head. The ſkin round the eyes is reddiſh and bare, and the ears are covered with a brown tuft of feathers: the reſt of the body, and the wings and tail, are yellow, mottled with dark brown. The thighs and legs are feathered almoſt down to the toes. The colours of the Bantam hen frequently vary.

THE PEACOCK.

THE peacock, ſay the Italians, has the plumage of an angel, the voice of a devil, and the guts of a thief. Indeed there is none of the feathered creation can vie with him for beauty when he appears with his tail expanded; but the horrid ſcream of his voice leſſens the pleaſure we ſhould otherwiſe receive in viewing him; and his inſatiable gluttony renders him one of the moſt noxious domeſtics that man has taken under his protection.

India firſt gave us peacocks; and we are aſſured that they are ſtill found in vaſt flocks, in a wild ſtate, in the iſlands of Ceylon and Java. So beautiful a bird could not be permitted to continue long at liberty in its diſtant

retreat; for ſo early as the days of Solomon, we find apes and peacocks among the articles imported in his Tharſhiſh navies. [Kings i. 10.]

The head and neck of this bird, beginning at the breaſt, are of a deep blue, and the head is ſmall in proportion to the body; on the crown of which is a tuft, conſiſting of fine green ſhafts of feathers, bearing a greater reſemblance to the ſtalks of plants newly ſprung up, than to feathers. The bill is whitiſh, and cloven pretty deep: the neck is long and ſlender; the wings are black towards the back, and red towards the belly. The tail, when ſpread, appears to be double; the leſſer being of a duſky colour, and not ſtanding up like the long one. The long feathers ſpring out of the rump, and the ſhorter ſeem calculated to ſupport them. The long feathers of the tail are of a cheſnut colour, embelliſhed with moſt elegant lines, which ſhine with gold; but the tips are of a dark green. The eyes of the feathers are party-coloured, of a deep green, ſhining like a chryſolite, and of a gold and ſapphire colour. They conſiſt of four circles, variouſly tinctured; the firſt is golden, the ſecond cheſnut, the third green, and the fourth, or middle, blue. The legs are armed with ſpurs like the common cock, and the belly is of a bluiſh green. Peacocks delight in ſpreading their tails to diſplay their beauty, and they are certainly moſt elegant birds.

The peacock, like other birds of the poultry kind, feeds principally on corn, and is particularly fond of barley. But, as it is a proud, capricious

capricious bird, there is hardly any food that it will not ſometimes covet. Inſects and plants are often eagerly ſought, even when it has a ſufficiency of its natural food before it. In the indulgence of theſe purſuits, walls cannot eaſily confine it; the tops of houſes it ſtrips of their tiles or thatch, lays waſte the labours of the gardener, roots up his choiceſt ſeeds, and nips his favourite flowers in the bud. The beauty of this bird is therefore but a poor compenſation for the miſchief it occaſions, and many of the more homely looking fowls have deſervedly the preference.

The pea-hen ſeldom lays above five or ſix eggs before ſhe ſits.

Theſe birds live about twenty years; and they have not that beautiful variegated plumage that adorns the tail, till their third year.

The pea-hen has no great variety in its colours, the wings, back, belly, thighs, and feet, being all brown, inclining to aſh colour; the top of the head and tuft are of the ſame colour; except that on the top of the head a few greeniſh ſpots are diſperſed. The irides are of a lead colour, and the chin entirely white. On the neck the feathers are green and undulated, but at the extremities near the breaſt they are white.

THE TURKEY.

THE turkey was unknown to the ancient naturaliſts, and even to the old world, before the

the diſcovery of America. It was peculiar to the new continent; and was not ſeen in England till the reign of Henry VIII.

Norfolk turkies are ſaid to be the largeſt of this iſland, weighing from twenty to thirty pounds each. But in the Eaſt-Indies, where they are known only in their domeſtic ſtate, they are often ſeen to weigh fifty or ſixty pounds.

The turkey expands its tail in the manner of a peacock: the neck and head are bare of feathers, and covered with a purple or reddiſh ſkin, which, when it aſſumes ſtatelineſs, ſwells, and is blown up, as it were, to a conſiderable ſize. It has a red fleſhy appendix, or carbuncle, reſembling a worm, upon the upper chap of the bill, which it can raiſe or contract at pleaſure. The tail conſiſts of eighteen feathers, and each wing has twenty-eight prime winged feathers. The legs have a kind of rudiment of ſpurs, which are very conſpicuous. The fleſh of a hen turkey is ſweet and delicate, and not inferior to that of a pullet; but that of a turkey-cock is not ſo excellent.

As to their diſpoſition, theſe birds are furious among themſelves, but extremely weak and cowardly againſt other animals which are even leſs powerful. The common cock frequently makes the turkey keep at a diſtance. Indeed the turkey cock will fly from the moſt contemptible animal that will venture boldly to face him. On the contrary, any thing that ſeems to fear him, he purſues with the inſolence of a bully; particularly children and lap-dogs,

to which he ſeems to have a peculiar averſion. After ſuch an exploit, he returns to his female train, diſplays his plumage around, ſtruts about the yard, and ſeems to glory in his valour.

The female ſeems of a milder diſpoſition; ſhe lays eighteen or twenty eggs, larger than thoſe of a hen, which are whitiſh, and freckled with duſky yellow ſpots.

THE PHEASANT

IS certainly a moſt elegant bird. The iris of the eyes is yellow, and the eyes are ſurrounded with a ſcarlet colour, ſprinkled with ſmall black ſpecks. On the fore-part of the head there are blackiſh feathers mixed with a ſhining purple. The top of the head and the upper part of the neck are tinged with a darkiſh ſhining green. In ſome pheaſants the top of the head is of a ſhining blue, and the head and neck appear either blue or green, according to the ſituation of the ſpectator. The feathers on the breaſt, the ſhoulders, the back, and the ſides, are blackiſh, with edges of a moſt exquiſite colour, which appear either black or purple, according to the different light in which the bird is viewed; and under the purple there is a tranſverſe ſtreak of gold colour. The tail is about eighteen inches long, from the end of the middle feathers to the root; the legs, feet, and toes, are of the colour of horn. On the legs there are black ſpurs which are ſhorter than thoſe of a cock: two of the toes

are

are connected by a membrane. The hen is not ſo beautiful as the cock, ſhe being nearly of the colour of a quail: ſhe lays eggs but once a year, which ſometimes amount to eighteen or twenty in number.

This bird is not only beautiful to the eye; it is alſo delicate when ſerved up to the table; but, as if diſdaining the protection of man, it has left him, to take ſhelter in the thickeſt woods and remoteſt foreſts. The cock, the turkey, the pintada, and all others of the domeſtic kind, when once reclaimed, have ſtill continued in their domeſtic ſtate, and perſevered in the habits and appetites of willing ſlavery. But the pheaſant, though taken from its native warm and pleaſant retreat, has ſtill continued its attachment to native freedom, and now continues wild among us, making the moſt envied ornament of our parks and foreſts, where it feeds on acorns, berries, and grain, the ſcanty produce of this cold climate.

But though in the woods the hen-pheaſant lays from eighteen to twenty eggs in a ſeaſon, yet in a ſtate of captivity ſhe ſeldom produces above ten. In the wild ſtate, ſhe hatches and rears up her brood with patience, vigilance, and courage; but when kept tame, ſhe attends improperly to this duty, ſo that a hen is generally her ſubſtitute to ſit for her.

Many have lately endeavoured to take theſe birds once more from the woods, and to keep them in places fitted for their reception. Like others of the poultry kind, they have but little ſagacity, and are eaſily taken. At night they

rooſt upon the higheſt trees of the wood; and come down by day among the brakes and buſhes in ſearch of food. In the winter their foot-ſteps may be traced in the ſnow, and they are frequently taken in ſprings. They are the moſt eaſily ſhot of any birds; for when they riſe, they always make a whirring noiſe, which is a ſufficient notice to the ſportſman; and being a large mark, and flying very ſlow, the moſt indifferent gunner can hardly miſs them.

When pheaſants are taken young into keeping, they become as familiar as chickens. The female, in her natural ſtate, makes her neſt of dry graſs and leaves; therefore, when brought up tame, the ſame materials ſhould be laid for her in the pheaſantry, which ſhe herſelf, in general, will diſpoſe in a proper manner. If ſhe neglects to ſit upon her eggs, a common hen muſt be procured to hatch them, which taſk ſhe will perform with perſeverance and ſucceſs. It is extremely difficult to rear the young ones, and care muſt be taken to ſupply them with ant-eggs, that being the food the old one leads them to gather when wild in the woods. In order to make theſe go the farther, they may be chopped up with curds or other proviſion. Theſe birds, when young, require to be fed with great exactneſs, both with regard to quantity and time; and it is neceſſary ſometimes to vary their food; wood-lice, earwigs, and other inſects, being occaſionally very agreeable to them. The place in which they are reared muſt be kept extremely clean, and their water ſhould be changed two or three times

times a day: they ſhould not be expoſed in the morning till the dew is off the ground, nor ſuffered to remain abroad after ſun-ſet. When they become adult, they are capable of ſhifting for themſelves, and then they are remarkably fond of oats and barley.

There are many varieties of the pheaſant, as well as of all other domeſtic fowls. There are white pheaſants, creſted pheaſants, and ſpotted pheaſants; but the golden pheaſant of China is the moſt beautiful of all others.

THE GUINEA HEN, OR PINTADA.

THE Guinea hen is about the ſize of a common hen, but, as it has longer legs, it appears much larger. Its head is naked, its back is round, and its tail turns downwards like that of a partridge. The head is covered with a kind of helmet, and the whole plumage is black or dark grey, ſpeckled with white. It has wattles which proceed from the upper lip, and not from the lower chap as in cocks. This gives it a very peculiar air, and its reſtleſs gait and odd chuckling ſound ſufficiently diſtinguiſh it from all other birds.

The Guinea hen came originally from Africa, but is now well known all over Europe.

Their habits are like thoſe of the poultry kind, and they agree in every other reſpect, except that the male and female ſo exactly reſemble each other, that they can hardly be diſtinguiſhed. The only obſervable difference lies

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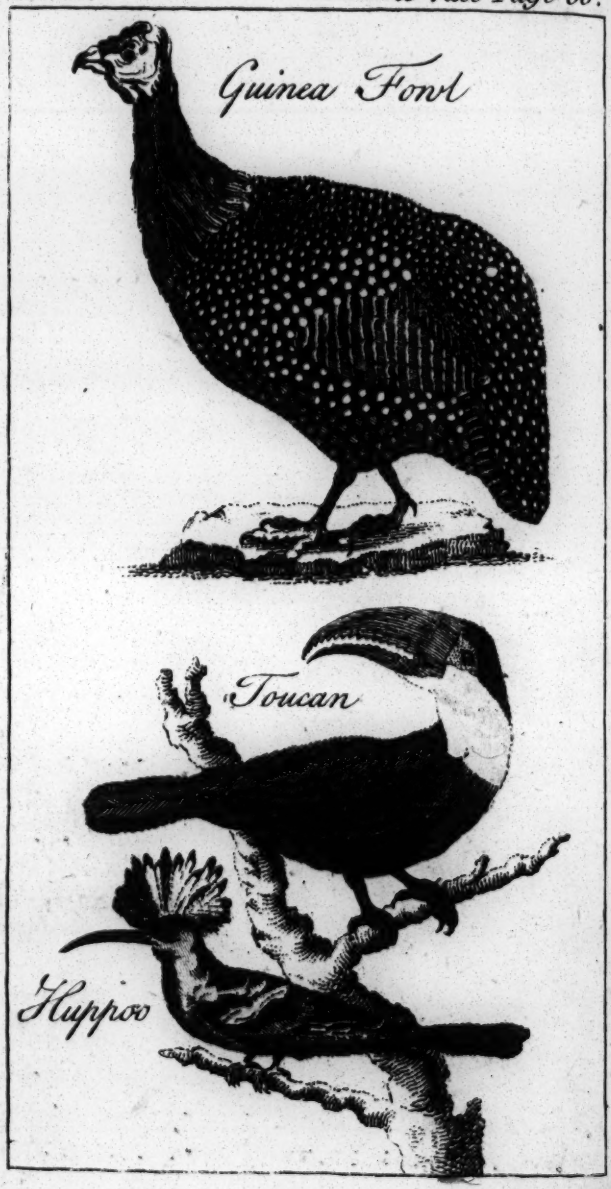

Guinea Fowl
Toucan
Huppoo

in the wattles, which in the cock are of a bluiſh caſt; in the hen they incline a little to a red. They are kept in this country rather for ſhew than uſe, as their fleſh is not much eſteemed, and great attention is required in rearing them.

THE BUSTARD.

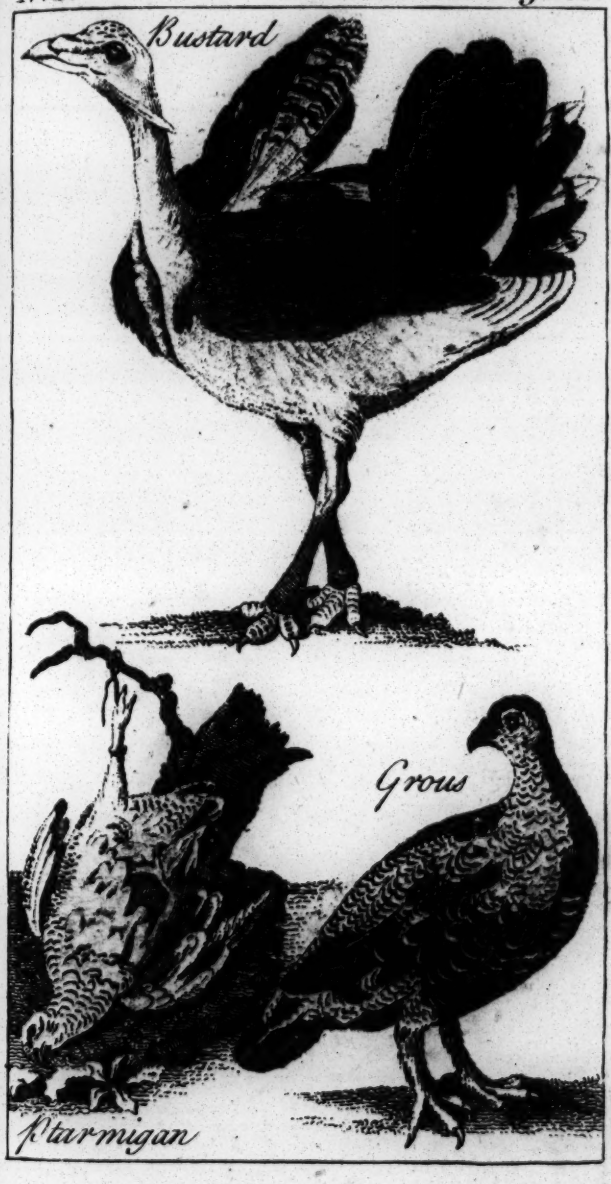
THIS is the largeſt land bird that is a native of Britain: it is much larger than the turkey, the male at a medium weighing twenty-five pounds. Its breadth is about nine feet, and the length almoſt four. The male has a tuft of feathers about five inches long on each ſide of the lower mandible. The head and neck are aſh-coloured; the back is barred tranſverſely with black, bright, and ruſt colour. The greater quill feathers are black; the belly white; and the tail, which conſiſts of twenty feathers, is marked with broad bars of red and black; the legs are of a duſky colour.

The female is about half the ſize of the male; the crown of the head is of a deep orange colour, traverſed with black lines, and the reſt of the head is brown; the lower part of the neck before is aſh-coloured. In other reſpects it reſembles the male, only the colours of the back and wings of the male are brighter.

The buſtard was once much more numerous among us than it is at preſent; but the increaſed cultivation of the country, and the extreme delicacy of its fleſh, has greatly thinned the ſpecies. It would probably have been long ſince

extirpated, but for its peculiar manner of feeding. Had it continued to ſeek ſhelter among our woods, it muſt have been deſtroyed in proportion as they were cut down. If in the foreſt, the fowler might approach it unobſerved; and the bird, from its magnitude, would be ſo excellent a mark, that it could not eaſily be miſſed; but the buſtard now inhabits only the open and extenſive plain, where it is plentifully ſupplied with food, and where every invader may be ſeen at a great diſtance.

Theſe birds are frequently ſeen in flocks of fifty or more in the extenſive downs of Saliſbury Plains, in Newmarket and Royſton Heaths, in Cambridgeſhire, the Dorſetſhire uplands, and ſo on as far as March or Lothian in Scotland. They run very faſt, and when on the wing, can fly ſlowly for ſeveral miles without reſting; but they take flight with great difficulty, and are ſometimes run down with greyhounds. They generally keep near their old haunts, ſeldom wandering above twenty or thirty miles. Their food conſiſts of the berries which grow among the heath, and thoſe large earth worms that appear in great quantities on the downs before ſun riſing in the ſummer. Theſe being replete with moiſture anſwer the purpoſe of liquids, and enable them to remain a long time without drinking on thoſe dry and extenſive tracts. But, as a ſecurity againſt drought, nature has furniſhed the males with a pouch, the entrance of which lies immediately under the tongue, and which will contain near ſeven quarts; and this they probably fill with


Bustard
Grous
Ptarmigan

water, to ſupply the hen when ſitting, or the young till they can fly.

The hen lays only two eggs, which are about the ſize of thoſe of a gooſe, of a pale olive brown with dark-coloured ſpots. They are about five weeks in hatching, and the young ones run about the inſtant they are out of the ſhell.

THE COCK OF THE WOOD.

THE female is called the hen of the wood. This ſpecies is found in no other part of Great Britain than on the northern iſlands of Scotland, and even there it is not often ſeen. It inhabits woody and mountainous countries, particularly foreſts of pines, birch trees, and junipers, feeding on the tops of the former, and the berries of the latter, which ſometimes give the fleſh ſuch a flavour, that it is hardly eatable. It ſeldom lays more than ſix or ſeven eggs, which are white, marked with yellow, and about the ſize of a common hen's egg.

The length of the male is about two feet eight inches, and the breadth three feet ten inches, and it often weighs fourteen pounds. The female is ſmaller, not exceeding twenty-ſix inches in length, and forty in breadth. The male and female alſo differ greatly in colour: the colour of the bill of the male is a pale yellow; the noſtrils are covered with duſky feathers; the head, neck, and back, are elegantly marked, ſlender lines of grey and black running tranſverſely. The feathers are long on the

hind part of the head, and there is a large tuft of long feathers beneath the throat. The upper part of the breaſt is a rich gloſſy green; the reſt of the breaſt and belly is black, intermixed with white feathers; the coverts of the wings are croſſed with undulated lines of black and reddiſh brown; the exterior webs of the greater quill feathers are black, with a white ſpot at the ſetting-on of the wings; the tail conſiſts of eighteen feathers, the middle of which is the longeſt, they are black, ſpotted with white on each ſide; the legs are very ſt. ng, and covered with brown feathers.

The bill of the female is duſky; the throat red; the head, neck, and back, marked with tranſverſe bars of red and black; on the breaſt are ſome white ſpots, and the lower part is of a plain orange colour; the tail, which is of a deep ruſt colour, is barred with black. She uſually lays her eggs in a dry place, and on moſſy ground. During the time of incubation, when ſhe is obliged to leave her eggs in queſt of food, ſhe covers them up ſo judiciouſly with moſs or dry leaves, that it is no eaſy matter to diſcover them. As ſoon as the young are hatched, they run after the mother with great agility, though ſometimes they are not entirely diſengaged from the ſhell. The hen leads them forward into the woods, ſhews them the ants' eggs, and the wild mountain berries, which are their principal food while they are young. The whole brood follows the mother for about a month or ſix weeks, when the young males entirely deſert her, and live together in great harmony

harmony till the beginning of ſpring. At this ſeaſon they begin to conſider each other as rivals, and the fear of rivalry totally extinguiſhes the ſpirit of ſociety. They attack each other with the fury of game cocks, and are at that time ſo inattentive to their own ſafety, that two or three of them are ſometimes killed at a ſingle ſhot.

THE BLACK COCK.

THIS is alſo called the Heathcock and black game. Like the former, theſe birds delight in woody and mountainous ſituations. In ſummer they feed on bilberries and other mountain fruits, and in the winter on the tops of the heath. This ſpecies and the cock of the wood are frequently ſeen in the woods perching like the pheaſant. In the ſummer they frequently deſcend from the hills to feed on corn. The hen uſually lays about ſix or ſeven eggs. At the beginning of winter the young males forſake their mother, and remain in flocks of ſeven or eight till ſpring; at which time they inhabit the woods. Like the cock of the wood, they are then very quarrelſome, fight together like game coeks, and are ſo entirely off their guard, that they may eaſily be ſhot.

The black cock is about one foot ten inches in length, and two feet nine inches in breadth, and weighs almoſt four pounds; the bill is duſky; the plumage of the body is black, gloſſed with a ſhining blue over the neck and rump; the coverts of the wings are of a duſky brown;

on the thighs and legs are dark brown feathers, with white ſpots on the former; the tail is forked, and conſiſts of ſixteen black feathers; the feathers under the tail, and the inner coverts of the wings, are white. The female does not exceed two pounds in weight; ſhe is about eighteen inches in length, and two feet ſix inches in breadth. The head, neck, and breaſt, are marked with alternate bars of black and dulliſh red; the back, coverts of the wings, and tail, are of the ſame colours, but the red is deeper; the tail, which is a little forked, conſiſts of eighteen feathers, variegated with red and white.

THE GROUS.

THIS bird is alſo called the Moorcock, or the red game. It is about one third larger than the partridge, and the colour reſembles that of a woodcock, but is ſomewhat redder. It has a ſmall head, a ſlender body, and a ſhort black bill; the throat is red; the plumage on the head and neck is of a tawny red; the back and ſcapular feathers are of a deeper red, with a large black ſpot on the middle of each feather; the breaſt and belly are of a dulliſh brown inclining to purple, croſſed with ſeveral narrow duſky lines. The female is ſmaller, and her colours are duller than thoſe of the male: the breaſt and belly are ſpotted with white, and the tips of ſome of the coverts of the wings are alſo white. Theſe birds build their neſts upon very low trees or ſhrubs, and lay from ſix to ten

ten eggs, which are white, with a greeniſh caſt, and ſpeckled with reddiſh ſpots. The young brood follows the hen the whole ſummer; in the winter they join in flocks of about forty or fifty, and become remarkably ſhy and wild: they generally keep on the tops of the hills, and are ſeldom found on the ſides, or in the vallies. Their food is the mountain berries and the tops of heath. They ſtrike with their bill like a hen, and fly with their feet hanging down.

THE PTARMIGAN.

THE ptarmigan is either of a pale brown or aſh colour, mottled with duſky ſpots; the tail conſiſts of ſixteen feathers, the two middle of which are aſh-coloured, mottled with black, and tipt with white; the two next are black, with a ſlight mark of white at their ends. Theſe birds are found in this iſland only in the Scottiſh Highlands: their weight is about fourteen ounces, their length thirteen inches and three quarters, and their breadth twenty-three inches. Their feet are cloathed with feathers to the claws; the nails are long, broad, and hollow; the firſt circumſtance guards them from the rigour of the winter, and the other enables them to form a lodge under the ſnow, where they lie in heaps to protect themſelves from the cold.

THE PARTRIDGE.

THE cock partridge weighs about fifteen ounces, the hen thirteen: the bill is white, and the crown of the head is brown, ſpotted with reddiſh white; the cheeks and forehead are of a deep orange colour, but much paler in the males than in the other ſex; the neck and breaſt are beautifully marked with narrow undulated lines of aſh colour and black; and in the hind part of the neck there is a ſtrong mixture of ruſt colour: on the breaſt of the male there is a broad mark in the ſhape of an horſe-ſhoe, of a deep orange hue; on the back, each feather is marked with ſeveral ſemicircular lines of black and reddiſh brown; the greater quill feathers are duſky, ſpotted with pale red upon each web. It has eighteen feathers in the tail, the ſix outermoſt on each ſide being of a bright ruſt colour; the others are marked with irregular lines of black and pale reddiſh brown; the legs are whitiſh.

The partridge is found in every country, and in every climate, as well in the frozen regions about the Pole, as the torrid tracts under the Equator. Wherever it reſides it appears to adapt itſelf to the nature of the climate. In Greenland it is brown in ſummer; but when the icy winter appears, it has a new covering ſuited to the ſeaſon; its outward plumage then aſſumes the colour of the ſnows, amongſt which it ſeeks its food, and is cloathed with a warm down beneath. Thus by the warmth and the colour

colour of the plumage it is doubly fitted for the place; the one defending it from the cold, and the other preventing it from being noticed by the enemy.

The manners and habits of theſe birds nearly reſemble all thoſe of the poultry kind; but their cunning and inſtinct ſeem ſuperior to thoſe of the larger kinds. Living in the very neighbourhood of their enemies, they have perhaps more frequent occaſion to put their little arts in practice, and learn, by habit, the means of evaſion or ſafety. Whenever a dog, or any other formidable animal, approaches the neſt of a partridge, the hen practiſes every art to draw him away. She keeps at a little diſtance before him, feigning to be incapable of flying, and juſt hopping up and falling down before him, but never going to ſo great a diſtance as to diſcourage her purſuer. At length, having entirely drawn him away from her ſecret treaſure, ſhe at once takes wing and diſappears.

The danger being over, and the dog withdrawn, ſhe calls her young, who immediately aſſemble at her cry, and follow her. They are uſually from ten to fifteen in a covey. A partridge will live from fifteen to ſeventeen years, if unmoleſted. Partridges, properly ſpeaking, make no neſt, being ſatisfied with laying their eggs upon the ground, where they find a little hay or ſtraw. The eggs are of a greyiſh colour, with a yellowiſh caſt, and have a pretty hard ſhell.

The places that partridges moſt delight in are corn fields, eſpecially while the corn grows; for

for that is a ſafe retreat, when they remain undiſturbed, and under which they uſually breed. They frequent the ſame fields after the corn is cut down, and that with another intent; for they then feed on the corn that has fallen from the ears, and find a ſufficient ſhelter for themſelves under covert of the ſtalks, eſpecially of thoſe of wheat ſtubble. When the wheat ſtubble is much trodden by men or beaſts, they retire to the barley ſtubble, and will there hide themſelves in coveys of ten or fifteen. When the winter comes on, and the ſtubble fields are trodden down or ploughed up, they then retire to the upland meadows, where they lodge in the high graſs, and among ruſhes; ſometimes they reſort to the low coppice woods, eſpecially if there are corn lands near them.

THE QUAIL.

THE quail is not above half the ſize of a partridge: the length is ſeven inches and an half, the breadth fourteen; the feathers of the head are black, edged with ruſty brown; the crown of the head is divided by a pale yellow line, beginning at the bill, and extending to the back; above each eye there is another line of the ſame colour; the chin and throat are whitiſh; the breaſt is of a pale yellowiſh red, ſpotted with black; the ſcapular feathers, and thoſe on the back, are marked with a long pale yellow line in the middle, and with iron-coloured and black bars on the ſides; the coverts of

of the wings are of a reddiſh brown, elegantly barred with paler lines, bounded on each ſide with black; the tail, which conſiſts of twelve ſhort feathers, is barred with black and very pale browniſh red; the legs are of a paliſh hue. In its habits and nature it reſembles all others of the poultry kind, except that it is a bird of paſſage.

The quail is not ſo prolific as the partridge, ſeldom laying more than ſix or ſeven eggs, which are whitiſh, marked with irregular ruſh-coloured ſpots. This bird is eaſily taken, and may be enticed any where by a call. Quail-fighting among the Athenians was a favourite amuſement: they ſtaked ſums of money on them, as we do with regard to game cocks, upon the ſucceſs of the combat. At preſent, however, the courage of this bird is diſregarded, but its fleſh is conſidered as a very great delicacy.

OF BIRDS OF THE PIE KIND.

THIS is the claſs of birds which contributes the leaſt to furniſh out the pleaſures, or ſupply the neceſſities, of man. The falcon hunts for him, the poultry tribe ſupply his table with delicacies, and the ſparrow race delight him with their warblings; the crane kind make a variety in his entertainments, and the tribe of ducks are not only delicate in their fleſh, but many

many of them furniſh valuable feathers; but in the claſs of birds of the pie kind, the pigeon is almoſt the only one that is uſeful in any reſpect. Like faithleſs ſervants, they are fond of the neighbourhood of men, becauſe they live chiefly by his labour; their buſineſs is to plunder in his abſence, and their deaths make him no atonement for their depredations.

But though this claſs is rather noxious than beneficial to man; yet, with reſpect to each other, no claſs of birds are ſo well fitted for ſociety; they are the moſt induſtrious, the moſt faithful, the moſt conſtant, and the moſt connubial. They are as remarkable for their inſtincts, as for their capacity to receive inſtruction; cunning and archneſs is obſervable in the look of the whole tribe: and ravens and crows are taught to fetch and carry with the docility of a ſpaniel.

In this extenſive claſs, however, it is not to be ſuppoſed that their manners are alike. The pigeon is gentle and ſerviceable to man; others are noxious, capricious, and noiſy: but they all agree in a few general characters; in having hoarſe voices, ſlender active bodies, and a facility of flight that baffles the boldeſt of the rapacious kinds in the purſuit.

THE RAVEN.

THE raven is larger than the carrion crow or the rook, and is not only diſtinguiſhed from them by its ſize, but by its bill being ſome-

what

what more hooked than thoſe of the other two. It weighs about three pounds; it is two feet two inches in length, and four in breadth when its wings are extended. The bill is ſtrong and thick; and the colour of the whole bird is black, finely gloſſed with deep rich blue, except the belly, which is duſky.

The raven is to be found in every region of the world; for, being ſtrong and hardy, it is uninfluenced by the changes of the weather. It bears, with equal indifference, the heat of the Line, or the cold of the Polar countries. While other birds ſeem numbed with cold, or pining with famine, the raven is active and healthy; buſily employed in prowling for prey, or ſporting in the coldeſt atmoſphere. Though *black as a raven* is proverbial, yet it is ſometimes found of a pure white, owing, perhaps, to the rigorous climates of the north. This change is wrought upon the raven as upon moſt other animals in that part of the world, where their robes, eſpecially in winter, aſſume the colour of the country they inhabit.

The raven is capable of being taught to perform almoſt any thing within the compaſs of any bird's abilities. He may be inſtructed in the art of fowling like a hawk; and, like a ſpaniel, he may be taught to fetch and carry. He may indeed be taught to ſpeak like a parrot; and Dr. Goldſmith aſſures us, that he can be taught to ſing like a man.

Taken as a domeſtic bird, the raven has many qualities that render him extremely amuſing. Active, curious, and impudent, he goes every

where, pries into every thing, runs after the dogs, plays tricks with the poultry, and with great ſkill and addreſs even gets into the good graces of the cook-maid, truly ſenſible of her ability to reward him for his attachment to her. By nature a glutton, and by habit a thief, not confined to petty depredations on the pantry or larder, like a miſer he hoards what he can neither exhibit nor enjoy: a ring, a tea-ſpoon, a piece of coin, or any glittering bawble, are always tempting baits to his avarice; theſe he will watch an opportunity to pilfer, and carry them to his magazine of curioſities.

The raven, in its wild ſtate, is a voracious plunderer. He is not delicate in the choice of his food, but, whether his prey be living, or dead and putrid, he greedily falls to; and, after having ſufficiently gorged himſelf, flies to acquaint his companions, that they may participate of the ſpoil. If the carcaſe ſhould happen to be already in the poſſeſſion of a fox, a dog, or any animal more powerful than himſelf, he ſits at a little diſtance, an humble ſpectator, till they are ſatisfied. If he can diſcover no carrion, which, from his exquiſite ſcent, he can ſmell at a vaſt diſtance, he then contents himſelf with fruits, inſects, and the accidental produce of the dunghill.

Ravens uſually build in trees, and lay five or ſix eggs, which are of a paliſh green colour, ſpotted with brown. They are very numerous in the environs of large cities or towns; but they often build in unfrequented places, and drive all other birds from their vicinity. They will not

Cron
Chough

not even ſuffer their young to remain in the ſame diſtrict, but oblige them to depart as ſoon as they are able to provide for themſelves. Martin aſſures us, in his deſcription of the Weſtern Iſles, that there are three little iſlands among the number, which are occupied by a pair of ravens each, that will not ſuffer any other birds to reſide among them.

Of all birds, the raven is moſt remarkable for longevity. We cannot eaſily credit what Heſiod aſſerts, that a raven will live nine times as long as a man; but it is certain that ſome of them have been known to live an hundred years.

THE CROW.

THE crow reſembles the raven in the form of its body, its appetites, its laying, and the manner of bringing up its young. It will feed on carrion, or any other filth, and when that is not to be obtained, it contents itſelf with grain and inſects. Like the raven, it will pick out the eyes of young lambs when they are juſt dropped. It only differs from that bird in being leſs bold, leſs docile, and leſs favoured by mankind. England produces more birds of this kind than any other country in Europe. Indeed it is ſo uncommon in Sweden, that Linnæus mentions it only as a bird that he once knew killed there. It lays about the ſame number of eggs as the raven, and they are of the ſame colour. Both of theſe birds are ſometimes found white or pied. The length of the crow

is about eighteen inches, the breadth two feet two inches, and the weight about twenty ounces.

THE ROOK.

IN its form the rook differs but little from the carrion crow, but it is rather larger; the colours in each are the ſame, the plumage of both being gloſſed with a rich purple. What principally diſtinguiſhes the rook from the crow, is the bill, which, by frequently being thruſt into the ground to fetch out grubs and earth-worms, is bare of feathers as far as the eyes, and appears of a whitiſh colour. This diſtinction is the more neceſſary to be pointed out, as the rook has but too frequently ſuffered for its ſimilitude to the crow; and thus an harmleſs bird, that has no carnivorous appetites, and feeds only upon corn and inſects, has been deſtroyed for another that feeds upon carrion, and frequently makes great havock among young poultry.

Rooks are ſociable birds, living in vaſt flocks; they build in woods and foreſts in the neighbourhood of man, and ſometimes make choice of groves, in the middle of large towns or cities, for the place of their retreat and ſecurity.

In ſome countries they are conſidered a benefit, in others a nuiſance; but they are generally ſuppoſed to do as much ſervice by deſtroying caterpillars and other noxious inſects, as they do injury by conſuming the grain of the huſbandman. They lay the ſame number of

eggs

eggs as the crow, and they are of the ſame colour, but ſmaller.

THE CORNISH CHOUGH.

THIS bird is about ſeventeen inches in length, and thirty-three inches in breadth, when the wings are extended. It weighs twelve or thirteen ounces. It is almoſt as large as a crow, and nearly of the ſame ſhape. The bill, legs, and feet are red, but the feathers all over the body are black. It is remarkable for the unuſual ſoftneſs of its voice, when it applies for meat to thoſe who often feed or careſs it; and is equally remarkable for its frightful ſhriek at the approach of any thing ſtrange. It is commonly kept about the houſes in Cornwall, where it becomes tame, like ravens or magpies, and is equally miſchievous, delighting in ſtealing money, or any ſhining bauble it happens to meet with. In its wild ſtate, it is very apprehenſive of danger, and builds its neſt upon inacceſſible cliffs, and in the middle of the ſteepeſt rocks. When tamed, it is very amuſing, docile, regular, and conſtant to its hour of meals. It goes early to rooſt, and generally takes ſhelter in ſome unfrequented place in tempeſtuous weather; but in ſerene weather, it gets upon the tops of houſes, or ſtruts about the ground in a very ſtately manner. This bird is found in Crete, Ireland, and Wales, as well as in the county of Cornwall in England.

The JACK-DAW.

THE length of this bird is thirteen inches, the breadth twenty-eight inches, and the weight nine ounces. The head is large in proportion to its body, which, Mr. Willoughby ſays, argues it to be ingenious and crafty; the forehead is black, the hind part of the head aſh-coloured; the breaſt and belly of the ſame colour, but more obſcure; the reſt of the plumage is black, ſlightly gloſſed with blue; the feet and bill are black. It is docile and loquacious. It builds in ſteeples, old caſtles, and high rocks, and lays five or ſix eggs in a ſeaſon. Daws flock together, and feed on inſects, grain, ſeeds, and fruits. They breed in England and many other countries of Europe.

The MAGPIE.

THE marks of this ſpecies are ſo well known, that it would be impertinent to give a particular deſcription. Were its other accompliſhments equal to its beauty, few of the feathered tribe could be put into competition with it. Its black, its white, its green and purple, with the rich and gilded combination of the gloſſes on its tail, are elegant beyond deſcription; but it is reſtleſs, vain, loud, and quarrelſome, and an unwelcome intruder every where, embracing every opportunity of doing miſchief.

The

Jackdaw
Gr.t & little Woodpeckers

The bill of the magpie reſembles that of the butcher bird, having a ſharp proceſs near the end of the upper chap. It alſo reſembles it in the ſhortneſs of the wings, and the form of the tail, each feather ſhortening from the two middlemoſt. It agrees ſtill more in its food, living upon worms, inſects, and ſmall birds. It will even deſtroy young chickens when it finds them ſeparated from the hen. It lays ſix or ſeven eggs, which are of a pale green colour, ſpotted with brown.

The magpie has the inſolence to teaſe the largeſt animals, when its inſults can be offered with ſecurity. They are frequently ſeen perched upon the back of an ox or a ſheep, pecking up the inſects that are to be found there, chattering and tormenting the poor animal at the ſame time. They make diligent ſearch after the neſts of birds, and if the parent eſcapes, its manſion is plundered of the eggs. Scarce any food comes amiſs to it. Like the raven, it feeds on carrion; like the rook, it delights in grain; and, like the cuckoo, it devours the eggs of birds. It is more provident, however, than moſt other gluttons; for when ſatisfied for the preſent, it treaſures up the remainder of the feaſt for another occaſion; even in a tame ſtate it will conceal its food when it has done eating, and, when its appetite returns, it will return to the ſecret hoard.

The neſt of the magpie is uſually placed in the middle of ſome hawthorn buſh, or on the top of an high tree. The body of the neſt is compoſed of hawthorn branches, with the thorns

thorns ſticking outwards. It is lined with fibrous roots, wool, and graſs, and then ingeniouſly plaiſtered round with mud or clay. Above the neſt, a canopy is raiſed, compoſed of the ſharpeſt thorns, ſo curiouſly interwoven as to admit of no entrance but at the door; that apperture being juſt large enough to permit egreſs and regreſs to the owners. In this fortified manſion the male and female hatch and bring up their brood with ſecurity, ſheltered from all attacks but thoſe of the adventurous ſchool-boy, who often pays too dear a price for the eggs or young birds, by the wounds he receives from the pointed thorns.

In its domeſtic ſtate, the magpie is a more cunning, and conſequently a more docile bird, than any other uſually taken into keeping. Many of thoſe who teach it to ſpeak, have a ridiculous cuſtom of cutting its tongue, which only torments the poor animal, without being of the ſmalleſt ſervice. Though its ſpeaking is ſometimes very diſtinct, its ſounds are too ſharp to be an exact imitation of the human voice. The length of this bird is about eighteen inches, the breadth twenty-four inches, and the weight about nine ounces. It is difficult to diſtinguiſh the cock magpie from the hen, the colours are ſo exactly alike.

THE JAY.

THE jay is one of the moſt beautiful of the Britiſh birds. The bill is ſtrong, thick, and

and black, and about a quarter of an inch long. The tongue is black, thin, and cloven at the tip. The forehead is white, ſtreaked with black: the head is covered with very long feathers, which it can erect into a creſt at pleaſure. The neck, back, breaſt, and belly, are of a faintiſh purple, daſhed with grey; and the covert feathers of the wings are of the ſame colour. The greater covert feathers of the wings are moſt beautifully barred with a lovely blue, black, and white. The tail conſiſts of twelve black feathers, and the feet are of a pale brown. It lays five or ſix eggs, which are of a dulliſh white, mottled with a pale brown. Like the magpie it feeds upon fruits, and in the ſummer is very injurious to gardens, being a great devourer of peaſe and cherries. In the autumn and winter they feed on acorns, and, according to Dr. Kramer, they will kill ſmall birds. Their native note is very diſagreeable, but they are very docile, and may be taught to imitate the human voice.

The length of this bird is thirteen inches, the breadth twenty inches and an half, and the weight between ſix and ſeven ounces.

THE CHATTERER.

THE chatterer is a native of Germany, and is ſomewhat ſmaller than the jay. It is variegated with a beautiful mixture of colours; red, aſh-colour, brown, cheſnut, and yellow; but

but what diſtinguiſhes this from all other birds are, the horny appendages from the tips of ſeven of the leſſer quill feathers, which have the colour and gloſs of the beſt ſealing wax. It lives in the woods, and feeds on juniper and other berries. This bird is alſo found in North America.

THE TOUCAN.

THE ſhape of this bird reſembles that of the jack-daw, and the ſize is nearly the ſame, with a very large head to ſupport its monſtrous bill; which from the angles of its mouth to its point is ſix inches and an half, and the breadth in the thickeſt part exceeds two inches. Its thickneſs near the head is one inch and a quarter; and it is a little arched or rounded along the top of the upper chap, the under ſide being round alſo. The whole of the bill is extremely ſlight, and almoſt as thin as parchment. The upper chap is of a bright yellow, except on each ſide, which is of a beautiful red; as is alſo the lower chap, except at the baſe, which inclines to a purple. There is a black line of ſeparation all round the baſe of the bill, between that and the head: the noſtrils are placed in the upper part of the bill, and are almoſt covered with feathers; which has occaſioned ſome writers to ſay, that the toucan is without noſtrils. Round the eyes, on each ſide of the head, is a ſpace of bluiſh

bluiſh ſkin, deſtitute of feathers, above which the head is black, except a white ſpot on each ſide, joining to the baſe of the upper chap. The hind part of the neck, the back, wings, tail, belly, and thighs, are black. The under ſide of the head, the throat, and the upper part of the breaſt, are white. There are a parcel of red feathers, in the form of a new moon with its horns upwards, between the white on the breaſt, and the black on the belly. The covert feathers under the tail are red, and thoſe above it yellow. The legs, feet, and claws are aſh-coloured, and the toes are diſpoſed like thoſe of parrots, two before, and two behind.

Travellers aſſure us, that notwithſtanding this bird is furniſhed with ſo formidable a beak, it is very gentle and inoffenſive, and ſo eaſily tamed, that it will ſit and hatch its young in houſes. They alſo ſay, it feeds principally on pepper, which it devours very greedily, gorging itſelf in ſuch a manner that it excludes it crude and unconcocted. Pozzo, who bred one of theſe birds tame, ſays it leaped up and down, moved its tail, and cried with a voice reſembling that of a magpie. Any thing upon which parrots fed ſeemed to be agreeable to it, but it was particularly fond of grapes; and, if they were plucked off one by one, and thrown into the air, it would catch them with great dexterity before they fell to the ground. Pozzo further informs us that its bill was hollow and extremely light, and conſequently it had but little ſtrength in a weapon which appeared ſo formidable;

formidable: but its tongue ſeemed to aſſiſt the efforts of this unwieldy machine. It was long, thin, and flat, and moved up and down; the animal often extending it five or ſix inches from the bill. It was of a fleſh colour, curiouſly fringed on each ſide with very ſmall filaments, exactly reſembling a feather.

It appears evident that this long tongue is ſtronger than the thin hollow beak that contains it. Probably the beak is only a kind of ſheath for this peculiar inſtrument, which is uſed by the toucan, not only in making itſelf a neſt, but alſo in obtaining its proviſion. It is, however, an abſolute certainty that it builds its neſt in the holes of trees, which have been previouſly made for that purpoſe; and it can hardly be ſuppoſed that ſo feeble a bill could penetrate ſuch hard materials.

The toucan has not only men, birds, and ſerpents to guard againſt, but alſo a numerous tribe of monkies, ſtill more prying, miſchievous, and hungry than all the reſt. It therefore ſcoops out its neſt in the hollow of ſome tree, leaving a hole juſt large enough to go in and out at. There it ſits, guarding the entrance with its great beak; and if the monkey, prompted by curioſity, or from any other motive, ventures to viſit it, he uſually receives ſuch a welcome from the toucan, that he is glad to eſcape with ſafety. This bird inhabits only the warm climates of South America, where it is much eſteemed for the delicacy of its fleſh, and for the beauty of its plumage.

THE GREEN WOOD-PECKER.

WOOD-PECKERS feed entirely on inſects; and their principal action is that of climbing up and down the bodies or boughs of trees. For the purpoſe of procuring their food, they are provided with a long ſlender tongue, armed with a ſharp bony end, barbed on each ſide, which, by the aſſiſtance of a curious apparatus of muſcles, they can exert at pleaſure, darting it to a great length into the clefts of the bark, transfixing and drawing out the inſects that lurk there. When a wood-pecker diſcovers a rotten hollow tree, where there are worms, ant's eggs, or inſects, it inſtantly prepares for its operations. Reſting by its ſtrong claws, and leaning on the thick feathers of its tail, it bores with its ſharp ſtrong beak, till it diſcloſes the whole internal habitation; then, either from its ſatisfaction at the ſight of the prey, or with intent to alarm the inſect colony, it ſends forth a loud cry, which creates terror and confuſion among the whole tribe, and puts them immediately in motion; while the bird luxurioufly feaſts upon them at leiſure, darting its tongue with unerring certainty, and devouring the whole brood.

The wood-pecker makes cavities in trees to form its neſt, and to lay in. For this purpoſe it chooſes thoſe trees that are decayed, or that have ſoft wood, like beech, elm, and poplar. In theſe it can, with great facility, make holes that are exactly round: but as it is delicate in

its choice, it uſually makes ſeveral before any one will give it entire ſatisfaction.

The neſt has neither feathers, ſtraw, nor any other lining; its eggs are depoſited in the hole, without any thing except the heat of the parent's body to keep them warm. Their number is uſually five or ſix, which are always oblong, and of a ſemi-tranſparent white.

The green wood-pecker is about thirteen inches long, twenty-one inches broad, and weighs ſix ounces and an half. The bill is duſky, triangular, and near two inches long: it is exceedingly ſtrong and hard, and formed like a wedge at the end. The eyes are ſurrounded with black, beneath which there is a crimſon mark in the males, though not in the females. The back, neck, and leſſer coverts of the wings, are green; and the rump is of a pale yellow. The greater quill feathers are duſky, ſpotted with white on each ſide. The tail conſiſts of ten ſtiff feathers, the ends of which are generally broken, as the birds reſt on them in climbing: the tips of them are black, and the other parts are alternately barred with duſky and deep green. The whole of the under part of the body is of a very pale green; and the thighs are marked with duſky lines. The legs, which are of a paliſh green, are ſhort and ſtrong; the thighs are very muſcular; two of their toes point forwards, and two backwards.

This bird is alſo called the rain-fowl, becauſe it is ſuppoſed to foretell rain, when it makes a greater noiſe than uſual.

THE

THE GREAT SPOTTED WOOD-PECKER.

THIS bird is about nine inches in length, ſixteen inches in breadth, and weighs two ounces and three quarters. The bill is of a black horn colour, and the forehead of a pale buff colour. The crown of the head is of a gloſſy black, and the hind part is marked with a rich deep crimſon ſpot. The cheeks are white, bounded beneath by a black line, which paſſes from the corner of the mouth, and ſurrounds the hind part of the head. The neck is encircled with a black colour; and the throat and breaſt are of a yellowiſh white. The back, rump, coverts of the tail, and leſſer coverts of the wings, are black. The quill feathers are black, each web being elegantly marked with round white ſpots. The four middle feathers of the tail are black, the next are tipped with dirty yellow, and the bottoms of the two outermoſt are black. The legs are of a lead colour. The colours of the female agree with thoſe of the male, except that the female wants that beautiful crimſon ſpot on the head.

THE LESSER SPOTTED WOOD-PECKER.

THIS reſembles the former in colour and ſhape, but is conſiderably ſmaller, and hardly

weighs an ounce. Its length from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail is only ſix inches, and its breadth, when the wings are extended, is eleven inches. It has all the characters and habits of the larger kind, but is not ſo frequently ſeen.

THE GUINEA WOOD-PECKER.

A TRAVELLER who walks into the foreſts of Guinea and Brazil is ſtruck with the multitude of bird's neſts hanging at the extremity of the branches of trees. Many birds build in this manner, but the chief of them are of the wood-pecker kind. The monkey and the ſnake are almoſt the only enemies this bird has to fear; and, to guard againſt them, it builds its neſt upon the moſt outward branches of a tall tree, ſuch as the banana, or the plantane. On one of thoſe immenſe trees are ſeen the ſtrangeſt aſſemblage of creatures that can be imagined. Some particular tribe of monkies inhabit the top, which drive off all others that attempt to aſſociate with them. About the trunk of the tree are twined great numbers of the larger kind of ſnakes, waiting till ſome unwary animal comes within the ſphere of their activity; and theſe extraordinary neſts hang in great abundance at the edges of the tree, inhabited by birds of the moſt delightful plumage.

They uſually form the neſt in the following manner: when the time of incubation approaches,

proaches, they fly about in ſearch of a kind of moſs peculiar to thoſe countries. It is a fibrous ſubſtance reſembling hair, which may be eaſily moulded into any form. This the little wood-pecker glues, by ſome viſcous ſubſtance gathered in the foreſt, to the extremeſt branch of a tree; then, adding freſh materials to thoſe already procured, a neſt is formed that hangs like a pouch from the point of the branch. On one ſide there is a hole to enter at, and all the interior parts are lined with the finer fibres of the ſame ſubſtance.

THE BIRD OF PARADISE.

THERE are of this ſpecies nine ſorts, according to ſome naturaliſts. Our countryman, Mr. Edwards, deſcribes three: the greater bird of Paradiſe; the king of the birds of Paradiſe; and the golden bird of Paradiſe.

The bird of Paradiſe deſcribed by Moregrave is of the ſize of a ſwallow, with a ſmall head and eyes, a ſharp beak, thick feet, and crooked claws; the feathers about the beak are ſoft as ſilk, green and brown above, and black below: the top of the neck is of a gold colour; underneath the neck is a mixture of gold and green: the breaſt is of a deep brown, and the reſt of the body, wings, and tail, of a beautiful browniſh colour: the long feathers on the ſides are of a gold colour near their riſe, but in other parts of a whitiſh yellow

The king of the birds of Paradiſe, men-

tioned by Cluſius, is the leaſt of the ſpecies: the wings are much longer than the body; the beak is white, and an inch in length; the lower part is covered with a ſort of red ſilky down, as well as the fore part of his head: the middle part of the eyes is full of black ſpecks: the feathers on the neck and breaſt are of a deep black, and have the reſemblance of ſilk: the back, wings, and tail, are all of the ſame colour, that is, of a duſky yellow: the feathers which cover the belly are white, but near the wings black: the quills are ſlender and black, and at the end rolled into a ſort of ball: on one ſide of them are long, fine, ſhaggy hairs: the upper ſide is of a ſhining deep green, but they are of a duſky yellow underneath.

The golden bird of Paradiſe has a gold-coloured neck as well as beak: the feet and toes are yellow; the breaſt and back of a pale orange colour; and the large feathers of the wing and tail are of a reddiſh orange.

The bird of Paradiſe, which is a native of the Molucca iſlands, exceeds in beauty all others of the pie kind: they are alſo found in great plenty in the iſland of Aro. The inhabitants are ſo ſenſible of the pleaſures theſe afford, that they call them God's birds, as being ſuperior to all others that he has created.

In the beginning of Auguſt, vaſt numbers of them are ſeen flying together; and, as the inhabitants ſuppoſe, follow their king, who is diſtinguiſhed from the reſt by the luſtre of his plumage and the reſpect and homage which is paid him. They perch in the evening upon the

the higheſt trees in the foreſt; generally making choice of one which bears a red berry, upon which they ſometimes feed when they have ſcarcity of other food. The natives who employ themſelves in killing theſe birds in order to ſell them to the Europeans, uſually hide themſelves in the trees where they reſort; and, having concealed themſelves in a kind of bower, which they form of the branches, they ſhoot at them with reedy arrows; and, if they happen to kill the king, as they call him, they ſeldom fail of taking the greateſt part of the flock.

THE CUCKOO.

THE note of the cuckoo is known to all the world, but the hiſtory and nature of the bird itſelf remains ſtill in obſcurity, particularly where it reſides in winter, or how it provides for its ſupply during that ſeaſon.

The claw and bill of the cuckoo are ſmaller and much weaker than thoſe of other rapacious birds. This ſingular bird, which is ſomewhat leſs than a pigeon, ſhaped like a magpie, and of a greyiſh colour, is diſtinguiſhed from all other birds by its round prominent noſtrils on the ſurface of the bill. The lower part of the body is of a yellowiſh colour, with black tranſverſe lines under the throat and on the top of the breaſt; the head, the upper part of the body, and the wings, are beautifully marked with tawny and black tranſparent ſtripes, and there

there are a few white ſpots on the top of the head; the ends of the feathers on the rump and the bottom of the back are white, and the inner edge of the outward part of the wings are painted with large tranſverſe white ſpots; the tail is pretty long, with black and tawny ſtreaks running acroſs it, and white ſpots on the outward edges of the feathers; it conſiſts of eight feathers, of which two in the middle are much the longeſt, and thoſe on each ſide grow regularly ſhorter; the legs, which are very ſhort, are cloathed with feathers down to the feet, which are weak and yellowiſh, and the claws are nearly of the ſame colour; it has four toes, two of which are placed before, and two behind, the more inward of theſe are ſhorter than the reſt; its mouth is large, and yellowiſh on the inſide.

Having diſappeared all the winter, the cuckoo diſcovers itſelf in our country early in the ſpring by its well known voice. The note of this bird is ſo uniform, that his name in all languages ſeems to have been derived from it; and in all countries it is uſed in the ſame reproachful ſenſe. This reproach probably aroſe from this bird making uſe of the neſt of another to depoſit its eggs in, leaving the care of its young to another of the feathered tribe. A water-wagtail or a hedge-ſparrow generally performs the office of nurſe to the young cuckoos. When the cuckoo is fledged and fitted for flight, it does not long attend its ſuppoſed parent; as its appetites for inſect food increaſes, it cannot expect a ſupply by imitating its little inſtructor;

it

it therefore takes a friendly leave, and ſeldom offers any violence to its nurſe. But all the little birds conſider the young cuckoo as an enemy, and revenge the cauſes of their kind by their repeated inſults.

It has been doubted whether theſe birds are carnivorous; but Reaumur, who bred up ſeveral, informs us that they would not feed upon bread or corn, fleſh and inſects being their favourite proviſion; but inſects ſeemed to afford them the moſt agreeable repaſt, and they greedily devoured them. Nevertheleſs, they are not to be conſidered as birds of prey, being deſtitute of the neceſſary ſtrength and courage, as appears by their flying from ſmall birds, by which they are every where purſued.

The length of the cuckoo is fourteen inches, the breadth twenty-five inches, and the weight about five ounces. The young birds are brown, mixed with black, and, in that ſtate, ſome authors have deſcribed them as old ones. The male and female reſemble each other in colour, except that the male has the corners of the mouth yellow, as in young ſparrows; and the head, back, and neck, are of an aſh colour, without any grey ſpots, and that the belly is darker. The fleſh of cuckoos is ſeldom eaten, for it is not eaſily obtained; and perhaps it may not generally be thought fit for that purpoſe; but thoſe who have taſted it affirm, that the young cuckoo is a moſt delicious morſel. The Italians in particular are extravagantly fond of it.

THE PARROT.

OF all foreign birds, the parrot is the beſt known among us, as it unites the greateſt beauty with the greateſt docility. It imitates the human voice better than any other bird; the raven being too hoarſe in its ſpeech, and the jay and magpie too ſhrill. Not many years ago, a gentleman in the city of London became poſſeſſed of two parrots, each having received a very different education from the other. One had received his tuition from a cook-maid in a gentleman's kitchen, and the other had obtained his inſtructions in a very religious family, where the morning and evening ſervices were regularly repeated every day. The former, probably from hearing the cook frequently make uſe of the ſame expreſſion, often cried out in a diſtinct and audible voice, *The deuce take my miſtreſs!* The latter, from attending to the reſponſes which he had heard in the religious family, always made reſponſes to the imprecations of the other in the following words: *We beſeech thee to hear us, good L—d!* ſo that, for hours together, the parrots would thus entertain themſelves and their auditors, one crying, *The deuce take my miſtreſs*, and the other uttering immediately afterwards, *We beſeech thee to hear us, good L—d!*

Willoughby relates a ſtory of a parrot, which, though it has been mentioned by Dr. Goldſmith, and many other authors, we hope we ſhall ſtand excuſed for introducing here. Theſe

are his words: "A parrot belonging to King Henry the Seventh, who then reſided at Weſtminſter, in his palace by the river Thames, had learned to talk many words from the paſſengers as they happened to take water. One day, ſporting on its perch, the poor bird fell into the water, at the ſame time crying out as loud as he could, *A boat! twenty pound for a boat!* A waterman, who happened to be near, hearing the cry, made to the place where the parrot was floating, and taking him up reſtored him to the king. As it ſeems the bird was a favourite, the man inſiſted that he ought to have a reward rather equal to his ſervices than his trouble; and as the parrot cried twenty pounds, he ſaid the king was bound in honour to grant it. The king at laſt agreed to leave it to the parrot's own determination, which the bird hearing, cried out, *Give the knave a groat.*"

Our naturaliſts have in vain attempted to arrange the various ſpecies of this bird. Thoſe who uſually bring over theſe birds ſeldom make more than three or four diſtinctions. The large kind, which are about the ſize of a raven, are called *Maccaws* and *Cockatoos*; the next are ſimply called *Parrots*; thoſe which are entirely white are called *Cories*, and the ſmalleſt ſize of all are called *Parakeets*. Though theſe are different in ſize, and vary a little in ſhades of colouring, they are all formed alike; we ſhall, therefore, not require our readers' attention to a tedious anatomical detail of the various ſpecies, where a continual repetition muſt occupy

ſcriptions

the room that we think may be employed in deſcriptions much more intereſting.

The toes of theſe birds are ſingularly contrived, which appears when they walk or climb, and when they are eating: for walking or climbing they ſtretch two of their toes forward, and two backward; but when they uſe their foot to convey the meat to their mouths, they dexterouſly turn the greater hind toe forward ſo as to take a firmer graſp of what they are going to feed on, ſtanding upon the other leg the whole time. They do not, like other animals, turn their meat inwards to the mouth, but, in a ſeeming aukward poſition, turn it outward, and in that manner hold the hardeſt nuts, till they break the ſhell with their bills, and extract the kernel.

The bill is of a peculiar kind, for both the upper and lower chaps are moveable. In moſt other birds the upper chap is connected, and makes one piece with the ſkull; but in theſe it is joined to the bone of the head by a ſtrong membrane placed on each ſide, that raiſes and depreſſes it at pleaſure. Thus they are enabled to open their bills the wider; which is extremely convenient, as the upper chap is ſo hooked, and hangs ſo much over, that if only the lower chap had motion, they could hardly gape wide enough to receive their nouriſhment.

The beak and the toes are often employed both together when the parrot is exerciſed in climbing. It cannot, like the other birds, hop from bough to bough, its legs not being adapted for that purpoſe; it firſt catches hold with the beak, as if with a hook; then it draws

up

up its legs and faſtens them; afterwards it advances the head and the beak again; and thus puts forward the body and the beak alternately, till it attains the height it aſpires to.

The tongue of the parrot reſembles the human tongue, on which account ſome imagine it is ſo well qualified to imitate the human voice; but the organs by which theſe ſounds are articulated lie farther down in the throat.

Though a common bird in Europe, the parrot will not breed here; the climate being too cold for its warm conſtitution. When arrived at maturity, it is able to endure our winter, yet it is in ſome degree affected by its rigour; its ſpirit and appetite being impaired during the colder part of that ſeaſon. This bird, however, lives a conſiderable time even with us, if properly attended to; and, indeed, it is to be lamented, that too much of the attention of ſome people is engaged in this buſineſs.

In their native reſidence among the woods they flock together, and mutually aſſiſt each other againſt their enemies. They uſually breed in hollow-trees, where they make a round hole, and have no lining to their neſts. The largeſt parrots lay two or three eggs, but it is probable that the ſmaller kind may lay more; it being an invariable rule in nature, that the ſmalleſt animals are the moſt prolific. In general, however, they have but two eggs, like thoſe of the pigeon, and nearly of the ſame ſize, marked with little ſpecks like thoſe of the partridge. Travellers aſſure us, that the

neſts of parrots are always found in the trunks of the talleſt, the ſtraiteſt, and the largeſt trees. The natives of thoſe countries are very aſſiduous in ſpying out the places where they neſtle; and, as thoſe birds which are taken young have always the greateſt docility, a neſt is conſidered as worth taking ſome trouble to be poſſeſſed of: the uſual method, therefore, is to cut down the tree; and though, in the fall, it frequently happens that the young parrots are killed; yet if one of them ſhould ſurvive, the ſpoiler conſiders himſelf as ſufficiently rewarded.

But, as the natives cannot always ſupply the demand for young ones, they are contented to take the old; which they ſhoot in the woods with heavy arrows, headed with cotton, which uſually ſtuns the bird, and brings it to the ground without killing it. After receiving this blow, ſome of the parrots die, and others recover. Thoſe which are reſtored become talkative by proper tuition, tender uſage, and plentiful feeding.

There are many motives for deſtroying theſe beautiful birds, notwithſtanding which they are in very great plenty; and are conſidered by the negroes on the coaſt of Guinea as their greateſt tormentors. They are perſecuted with the inceſſant ſcreaming of flocks of parrots, which alſo devour whatever fruits they attempt to produce by art in their little gardens. They are not indeed quite ſo numerous and deſtructive in other places; but there is hardly a country of the tropical climates that

Cockatoo
Turtle
Rock Pidgeon

has not many of the common kinds, as well as ſome which are peculiarly its own.

Though parrots have uſually the ſame diſorders with other birds, and ſome peculiar to their kind, they are generally long-lived; and, if properly attended, will live from twenty-five to thirty years.

THE COCKATOO.

OF theſe there are two kinds: the greater cockatoo is about the ſize of a raven, and has a large ſtrong bill, with a ſkin over the baſe of the upper chap, where the noſtrils are placed. Both the ſkin and bill are of a bluiſh black; and, in proportion to the body, the head is large. The eyes are of a dark colour, ſurrounded with a bare aſh-coloured ſkin; and the feathers of the head are very long and looſe, but thoſe at the top of the head are longeſt, which the bird can raiſe at pleaſure. This is the method it takes to expreſs its reſentment when it is offended. The plumage in general is white, though tinctured with other colours in many parts. The tail is ſhort, and conſiſts of feathers of an equal length. The legs and feet are of a lead colour, and the toes reſemble thoſe of other parrots. It is an Eaſt Indian bird, and is frequently heard to cry *cockatoo* very diſtinctly.

There is a leſſer cockatoo, which reſembles

the other in every particular, except in magnitude.

THE COMMON PIGEON.

THE tame pigeon, and all its beautiful varieties, derive their origin from one ſpecies, the ſtock-dove; the name implying its being the ſtock or ſtem from whence the other domeſtic kinds have proceeded. This bird, in its natural ſtate, is of a deep bluiſh aſh colour; the breaſt is daſhed with a fine changeable green and purple; the ſides of the neck with a ſhining copper colour: the wings are marked with two black bars, one on the quill feathers, and the other on the coverts. The back is white, and the tail is barred near the end with black. Theſe are the colours of the pigeon in a ſtate of nature; and, from theſe ſimple tints, the art of man has propagated a variety, that words cannot deſcribe, nor even fancy ſuggeſt.

From the domeſtic pigeon many elegant varieties are produced, which are diſtinguiſhed by names expreſſive of their ſeveral properties; ſuch as tumblers, carriers, jacobines, croppers, pouters, runts, turbits, owls, nuns, &c. but it would be a vain attempt to mention them all; ſo much is the figure and the colour of this bird under human controul, that pigeon-fanciers, by coupling a male and female of different ſorts, can breed them to a feather, as they expreſs it.

The

The dove-houſe pigeon breeds every month; but, when the weather is ſevere, or the fields are covered with ſnow, it is neceſſary to ſupply it with food. At other times, it may be left to provide for itſelf, and the owner is ſufficiently repaid for affording it protection. It lays two white eggs, which uſually produce young ones of different ſexes.

The produce of this bird, in its domeſtic ſtate, is ſo very extraordinary, that from a ſingle pair near fifteen thouſand may be produced in the ſpace of four years. The ſtock-dove, however, ſeldom breeds above twice a-year.

Pigeons have a very piercing ſight, and can hear at a vaſt diſtance. They are alſo very ſwift in flight, eſpecially when they are purſued by the hawk or kite.

Any lord of a manor may build a pigeon-houſe upon his land, but a tenant cannot do it without the lord's licence. When perſons ſhoot at or kill pigeons within a certain diſtance of the pigeon-houſe, they are liable to pay a forfeiture.

THE CARRIER.

THE carrier, from the ſuperior attachment it ſhews to its native place, is employed in many places as a moſt expeditious courier. Theſe pigeons are diſtinguiſhed from all others by their eyes, which are ſurrounded with a broad circle of naked white ſkin, and by being of a dark blue or blackiſh colour. The upper chap

of the bill is alſo covered with the ſame kind of ſkin, which reaches from the baſe to below the middle. Theſe birds are firſt brought from the place where they were bred, whither it is intended to ſend them back with information. The letter is tied under the wing, and the little animal is let looſe to return. It no ſooner finds itſelf at liberty, than its paſſion for its native ſpot directs all its motions. Upon theſe occaſions it flies directly into the clouds to an amazing height; and then, with the greateſt certainty and exactneſs, directs itſelf by ſome ſurpriſing inſtinct towards home, which is ſometimes at a vaſt diſtance, bringing its advices to the perſons to whom they are directed. How they diſcover the place is utterly unknown to us; it is however certain, that in the ſpace of an hour and an half they can perform a journey of forty miles, which the fleeteſt quadruped would be at leaſt three times as long in performing. Anciently theſe birds were brought up with extraordinary care, in order to be ſent from governors in a beſieged city, to generals that were going to relieve it; from princes to their ſubjects with the tidings of ſome fortunate events; or from lovers to their miſtreſſes with a billet-doux. In our country, theſe aerial meſſengers were till lately employed for a very ſingular purpoſe, being ſet at liberty at Tyburn, at the inſtant the fatal cart was drawn away, to give notice to diſtant friends of the departure of the unhappy criminal.

THE

THE RING-DOVE.

ATTEMPTS have been made to domeſticate this ſpecies by hatching their eggs under the common pigeon in dove-houſes; but as ſoon as they could fly, they betook themſelves to the woods where they were originally produced. The ring-dove is conſiderably larger than the former, and makes its neſt of a few dry ſticks in the boughs of trees. In the beginning of winter theſe birds aſſemble in the woods in great flocks, and leave off cooing; nor do they reſume this note of courtſhip till the beginning of March, which they continue to practiſe till the approach of winter. The ring-dove is the largeſt of the pigeon tribe, and may immediately be diſtinguiſhed from all others by its ſize. It is eighteen inches in length, thirty in breadth, and weighs about twenty ounces. The head, back, and coverts of the wings are of a bluiſh aſh colour: the lower part of the neck and the breaſt are purple, inclining to red, and daſhed with aſh colour. On the hind part of the head is a ſemicircular line of white, above and below which the feathers are gloſſy, and of changeable colours, as oppoſed to the light. The belly is of a yellowiſh white; the great quill feathers are duſky, and the reſt are aſh-coloured.

THE TURTLE-DOVE.

THE turtle-dove is a much ſhyer bird than any of the former. It may readily be diſtinguiſhed from the reſt by the iris of the eye, which is of a fine yellow, and a beautiful crimſon circle which encompaſſes the eye-lids. The forehead is whitiſh; the top of the head aſh-coloured, mixed with olive. On each ſide of the neck is a ſpot of black feathers, beautifully tipt with white: the back is aſh-coloured, bordered with olive brown: the ſcapulars and coverts are of a reddiſh brown, ſpotted with black: the quill feathers are of a duſky brown; the breaſt of a light purpliſh red, the verge of each feather being yellow: the belly is white, and the ſides and inner coverts of the wings bluiſh. The tail, which is three inches and an half long, has two feathers in the middle, of a duſky brown; the others being black tipt with white. The head and exterior ſides of the outward feathers are entirely white.

The fidelity of theſe birds is proverbial; and a pair being put in a cage, if one dies, the other will not long ſurvive it. The turtle-dove is a bird of paſſage, and few or none remain in our northern climates in winter, unleſs they are kept in aviaries or cages. This dove is about twelve inches in length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail; and the breadth, when the wings are extended, is twenty-two inches.

The TUMBLER.

OF this ſpecies there are variety of colours. When they fly, they have very extraordinary motions, frequently turning themſelves in the air, like a ball that is thrown up.

To theſe might be added a long catalogue of foreign pigeons, of which we know little more than the plumage and the names.

Of BIRDS of the SPARROW KIND.

The THRUSH.

THE thruſh and its affinities are the largeſt of the ſparrow kind, and are diſtinguiſhed from all others of this claſs, not only by their ſize, but by their bills, which are a little bending at the point; by a ſmall notch near the end of the upper chap; and by the outer toe adhering as far as the firſt joint of the middle toe.

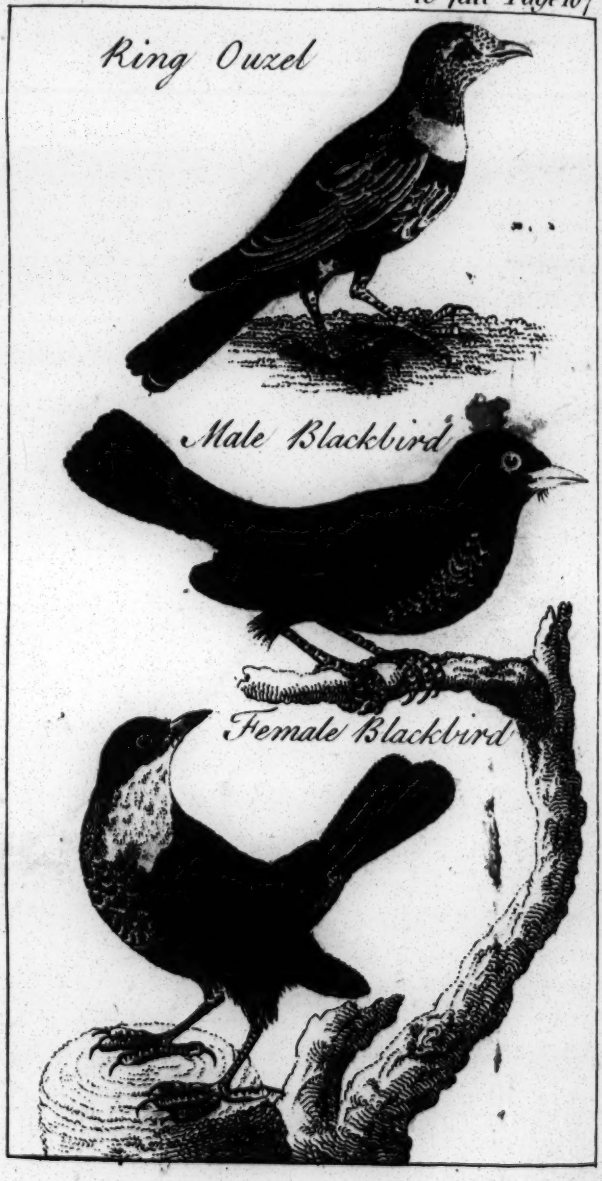
The miſſel-thruſh is much larger than any other of the kind: it is eleven inches in length, ſixteen in breadth, and weighs about five ounces. It differs but little from that well-known bird the throſtle. The ſpots on the breaſt indeed are ſomewhat larger; and the inner coverts of the wings,

wings, which are white in the miſſel-thruſh, are yellow in the throſtle. The miſſel-thruſh builds its neſt in a buſh, or on the ſide of a tree, ſometimes in a thick hedge near the ground; and lays four or five eggs in a ſeaſon. Its ſong is very fine, which it begins in ſpring, ſitting on the ſummit of a high tree: but its note of fear or anger is between a chatter and a ſhriek, and is extremely harſh and diſſonant. Of all the feathered tribe, this is the largeſt that has muſic in its voice: thoſe of greater magnitude can only chatter, ſcream, or croak. Its food are inſects, holly, and the berries of miſletoe.

The outſide of the thruſh's neſt conſiſts of fine ſoft moſs, interwoven with graſs, hay, &c. The inſide is very curiouſly plaiſtered with cow-dung. In this the black-bird differs from the thruſh, as he always lines his neſt with mud or clay: the black-bird lays a covering of ſoft ſtuff on the inſide to lay her eggs upon; the thruſh depoſits her's upon the bare inſide or plaiſtering. The eggs are of a bluiſh colour, tinctured with green, ſpeckled with ſmall black ſpots, chiefly at the largeſt end. The depth of the neſt is about two inches and an half; the diameter of the inſide, at the top, four inches. In making the neſt, the bird ſtands within ſide, making her own body the rule of her dimenſions in building.

The young may be taken at twelve or fourteen days old, or ſooner, if the weather be mild: they muſt be kept clean and warm, and fed with raw meat, bread, and hemp-ſeed bruiſed:

the


Ring Ouzel
Male Blackbird
Female Blackbird

the meat muſt be cut ſmall, and the bread a little moiſtened before they are mixed together. It is neceſſary that they ſhould be fed once in about two hours.

THE BLACK-BIRD.

THE black-bird is one of the firſt that proclaims the welcome ſpring by his ſhrill harmonious voice, as if he were the harbinger of nature, to awaken the reſt of the feathered tribe to prepare for the approaching ſeaſon. This bird is of a very retired and ſolitary nature, and frequents hedges and thickets. It breeds very early in the year, and frequently has young ones by the end of March. It builds a very ingenious neſt: the outſide conſiſts of moſs, ſlender twigs, fibres of roots, all very ſtrongly cemented with clay, the inſide being plaiſtered with clay, and lined with ſtraw, hair, or other ſoft materials. It lays four or five eggs of a bluiſh green colour, marked with irregular duſky ſpots. The black-bird uſually builds in a hedge near the ground, and before there are many leaves upon the buſhes; and the neſt, on account of its magnitude, may be eaſily diſcovered. The young may be taken when they are about twelve days old.

The black-bird is the deepeſt-toned warbler of the woods, but is ſo loud in a cage as to be rather unpleaſant. It begins to ſing early in the ſpring, and continues its muſic part of the ſummer, but deſiſts in the moulting-ſeaſon. I however

however re-aſſumes it for ſome time in the firſt winter months.

When the male has attained its full age, the colour is of a fine deep black, the bill of a bright yellow, and the edges of the eye-lids of the ſame colour. When young, the bill is duſky, and the plumage of a ruſty black; but they attain their proper colour at the age of one year.

The black-bird is about eleven inches in length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail; of which the bill is one inch, and the tail four inches: it is not taken old and tamed, but always brought up from the neſt.

THE FIELD-FARE.

FLOCKS of field-fares viſit our iſlands about Michaelmas, and leave us about the beginning of March. It is imagined that thoſe which come here have taken their flight from Norway, and the adjacent countries, forced away by the exceſſive rigour of the ſeaſon in thoſe cold regions: thoſe in the more moderate climates, as Pruſſia and Auſtria, not only breed, but winter in thoſe countries. With us they are inſipid tuneleſs birds, but in the more northern countries they ſing moſt delightfully. They build their neſts in hedges, and lay five or ſix bluiſh green eggs ſpotted with black. The weight of this bird is about four ounces; the length is ten inches, and the breadth ſeventeen. The head is aſh-coloured, inclining to olive, and

and ſpotted with black: the back, and greater coverts of the wings, are of a fine deep cheſnut: the rump is aſh-coloured, and the tail is black; except the lower parts of the two middle feathers, and the interior upper ſides of the outer feathers: the firſt being aſh-coloured, and the latter white. The legs are black, and the talons are very ſtrong. The fleſh of the fieldfare is reckoned exceedingly good.

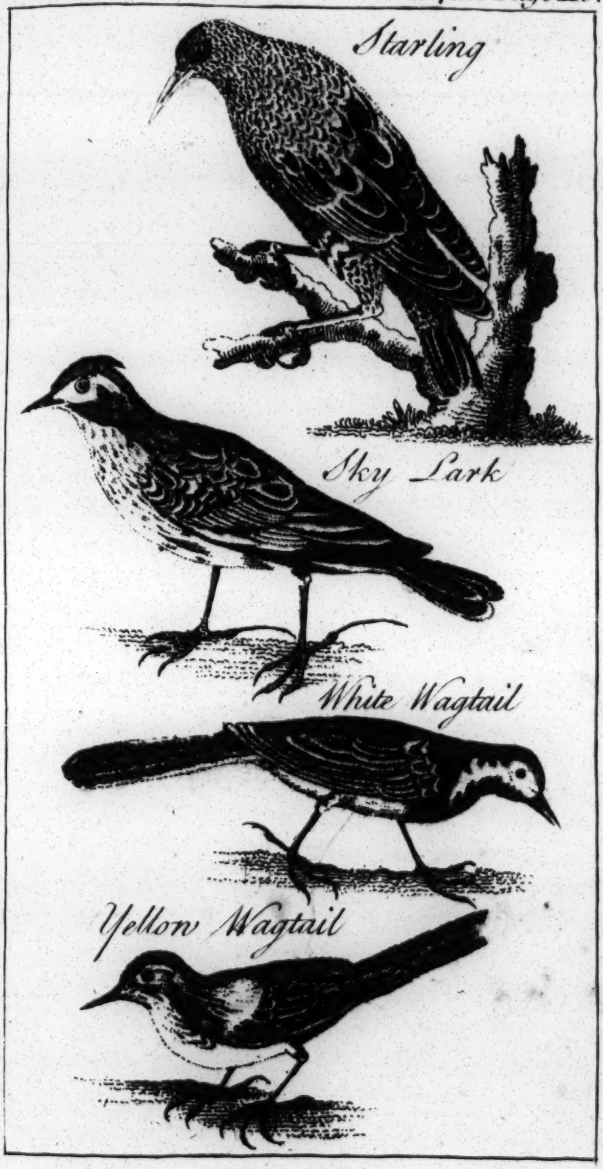
THE THROSTLE.

THIS bird is alſo called the ſong-thruſh, or mavis. It is the fineſt of our finging birds, not only for the ſweetneſs and variety of its notes, but for the long continuance of its melody; as it entertains us with its ſong for almoſt three parts of the year. Like the miſſel-bird, it chooſes to deliver its muſic from the top of a high tree, but deſcends to ſome low buſh or thicket to form its neſt, which is compoſed of earth, moſs, and ſtraw, and the inſide is curiouſly plaiſtered with clay. It lays five or ſix eggs, of a pale bluiſh green, marked with duſky ſpots. The length of this ſpecies is about nine inches, the breadth thirteen inches and an half, and the weight three ounces. It breeds early in the ſpring, the young being frequently hatched in the beginning of April.

THE STARE OR STARLING.

THE ſtarling may be diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of this tribe, by the gloſſy green of its feathers in ſome lights, and the purple in others. The weight of the male ſpecies is above three ounces, and that of the female ſomewhat leſs. The length is eight inches and an half, and the breadth fourteen inches and an half. The feathers on the head, neck, and upper part of the back, are black, varied with a moſt beautiful green and purple, as oppoſed to different lights. The tips of the feathers on the head are of a yellowiſh brown, and thoſe on the neck are white: they are of a ſingular form, being long, narrow, and pointed. The lower part of the back, the rump, the coverts of the wings, and the lower part of the breaſt, are black, gloſſed with green. The tips of the feathers on the breaſt are white, thoſe of all the reſt being yellowiſh; and the belly is gloſſed over with a deep purple. The tail is ſhort, and the wings, when cloſed, reach within half an inch of the end. The legs and feet are black, tinged with red.

The ſtarling breeds in hollow trees, eaves of houſes, towers, ruins, cliffs, and frequently in high rocks over the ſea. It lays four or five eggs of a pale greeniſh aſh colour; and makes its neſt of ſtraw, ſmall fibres of roots, and moſs. Theſe birds aſſemble in vaſt flocks in winter, and feed upon worms and inſects. At the approach of ſpring, they aſſemble in fields, as if


Starling
Sky Lark
White Wagtail
Yellow Wagtail

in conſultation together, and ſeem to take no nouriſhment for ſeveral days: the majority of them leave the country, and the reſt breed here.

This bird has naturally a wild, ſcreaming, uncouth note, but it is much eſteemed for its aptneſs in imitating the human voice, ſpeaking articulately, and learning to whiſtle a variety of tunes. A ſtarling, educated under a judicious maſter, becomes ſo accompliſhed as to be ſometimes ſold for five or ſix guineas.

Starlings may be taken at about ten days old, and may be fed in the ſame manner as young black-birds. The perſon who feeds them ſhould, while they are eating, frequently repeat ſuch words as he would chooſe to have them learn, and he will find them very apt ſcholars. Many perſons ſlit their tongues, imagining it will enable them to talk more articulately; but it is a moſt ridiculous practice, and only tortures the poor animal, without being of the leaſt ſervice.

Though naturally a hardy bird, it is ſubject to the cramp and fits, when confined in a cage. Sometimes it is ſo ſuddenly ſeized, that it will fall from its perch, and beat itſelf to death in a few moments: a ſpider, or meal-worms are a good remedy againſt theſe complaints, and ſhould be adminiſtered twice or thrice a week; each doſe to conſiſt of about three.

The AMERICAN MOCK-BIRD.

THIS bird is about the ſize of a thruſh, has a reddiſh bill, and the colours of its feathers are white and grey. Excluſive of its own natural notes, which are very muſical and ſolemn, it can aſſume the tone of every other animal in the foreſt, whether quadruped or bird. It ſeems to delight in leading them aſtray. Sometimes it allures the ſmaller birds with the call of their males, and when they come near, it terrifies them with the ſcreams of the eagle. It can mimic any of the feathered tribe to the greateſt exactneſs, and there is none that has not at times been deceived by its call. Such birds, however, as we uſually ſee famed for mimicking with us, have no peculiar merit of their own, but the mock-bird is ever moſt ſure to pleaſe when it is moſt itſelf. At thoſe times it frequently viſits the houſes of the American planters, and paſſes the whole night on the chimney-top, pouring forth the ſweeteſt variety of notes of any of the feathered creation. It builds its neſt in the fruit-trees near houſes, feeds upon fruits and berries, and is eaſily domeſticated.

The RING-OUZEL.

THESE birds are ſomewhat larger than a black-bird. In ſome of them the bill is wholly black, in others the upper half is yellow: there are

are a few briſtles on each ſide of the mouth. The feathers on the head, and the upper part of the body, are duſky, edged with pale brown: the quill-feathers and the tail are black. The coverts of the wings, the upper part of the breaſt, and the belly, are duſky, ſlightly edged with aſh colour. The breaſt is adorned with a white creſcent in the middle, with the horns pointing to the hind part of the neck. This bird is found in Derbyſhire, Yorkſhire, and other places in the north of England. It is eleven inches in length, and ſeventeen in breadth.

THE WATER-OUZEL.

THIS bird is alſo called the water-crake. It frequents ſmall brooks, particularly thoſe that run through a rocky country. It is of a very retired nature, and is never ſeen but ſingle, or with its mate. It makes its neſt in holes in the banks, and lays five white eggs, adorned with a fine bluſh of red. It feeds on ſmall fiſh and inſects; and though it is not web-footed, and the whole form of the body denotes it to be a land-fowl, yet it will dart itſelf quite under the water after fiſh. This bird is frequently ſeen in the northern counties, and particularly in Wales. It is ſeven inches in length, and eleven in breadth, and weighs about two ounces and an half. The bill is narrow, the eye-lids are white; the head, cheeks, and hind parts of the head, are

duſky; the back, the coverts of the wings, and the coverts of the tail, are alſo duſky, bordered with bluiſh aſh colour; the throat and breaſt are white, and the belly of an iron colour. The legs are of a pale blue before, and black behind. When it is ſitting, it often flirts up its tail, which is ſhort and black.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

THE nightingale takes its name from *night*, and the Saxon word *galan*, to ſing; expreſſive of the time of its harmony. It is about the ſize of the red-ſtart, but ſlenderer, longer bodied, and more elegantly formed. The head and back are of a pale tawny, daſhed with olive: the throat, breaſt, and upper part of the belly, are of a light gloſſy aſh colour, and the lower belly almoſt white. The exterior webs of the quill feathers are of a dull reddiſh brown: the tail is of a deep tawny red. The legs and feet are of a deep aſh colour. The irides are hazel, and the eyes remarkably large and piercing.

This bird viſits England in the beginning of April, and leaves it in Auguſt. It is found only in ſome of the ſouthern parts of the country; being totally unknown in Scotland, Ireland, or North Wales. They frequent thick hedges and low coppices; uſually keeping in the middle of the buſh, and conſequently are but ſeldom ſeen. They begin their ſong in the evening, and generally continue it the whole

whole night; and for weeks together, if undiſturbed, they will ſit upon the ſame tree.

The nightingale's note is ſoft, various, and interrupted. She ſo frequently pauſes, that the pauſing ſong would be the proper epithet for this bird's muſic with us; which is more pleaſing than the warbling of any other bird, becauſe it is heard at a time when all the reſt are ſilent.

The nightingale builds its neſt about the beginning of May, and lays four or five eggs, which are of a brown nutmeg colour; but, in our cold climate, the whole number is ſeldom hatched.

The ſweetneſs of this bird's muſic has induced many to abridge its liberty to be ſecured of its ſong. Its notes, however, in captivity are leſs alluring than when it is unconfined.

The nightingale ſeldom ſings near its neſt, leſt it ſhould be diſcovered by that means. It frequents cool and ſhady places, among ſmall groves and buſhes; but it delights in no high trees, except the oak. Young nightingales ſhould not be taken from the neſt, till they are almoſt as well fledged as the old ones; and though, when they are old, they are apt to be ſullen, and refuſe their meat, yet their mouths are eaſily opened; and when they are thus forcibly fed for a few days, they begin to be reconciled to their ſituation, and voluntarily take their food.

THE ROBIN RED-BREAST.

THE ſong of the red-breaſt is remarkably fine and ſoft, and the more to be valued, as we enjoy it the greateſt part of the winter, and early in the ſpring. During the latter ſeaſon the red-breaſt haunts the grove, the garden, and the wood. In winter, when there is a ſcarcity of proviſion, it will even enter houſes to ſeek its food; and is remarkably ſociable with mankind, though ſo extremely petulant as to be at conſtant war with its own tribe.

In ſome countries the red-breaſt builds in the crevice of ſome moſſy bank, or at the foot of an hawthorn in hedge-rows: in others it chooſes the thickeſt coverts, and conceals its neſt with oak-leaves. It uſually lays five or ſix eggs, which are of a cream colour, ſprinkled all over with fine reddiſh ſpots, which are ſo numerous at the blunt end, that they almoſt appear as one.

The bill of the red-breaſt is duſky; the forehead, chin, throat, and breaſt, are of a deep orange colour. The head, the hind part of the neck, the back, and tail, are of a deep aſh colour, tinged with green. The wings are rather darker, with the edges of a yellowiſh hue. The legs and feet are duſky.

In a confined ſtate theſe birds are ſubject to the cramp and giddineſs, for the cure of which meal-worms are effectual. A little liquorice, or ſaffron in their water, will make them long-winded, and aſſiſt them in their ſong.

THE

THE RED-START.

THIS bird appears among us only in the ſpring and ſummer, and viſits us almoſt at the ſame time with the nightingale. It makes its neſt in hollow-trees, holes in walls, and other buildings; it is formed of moſs on the outſide, and lined with hair and feathers. The red-ſtart lays four or five eggs, which reſemble thoſe of the hedge-ſparrow, but are ſmaller, and of a paler blue. It is ſo remarkably ſhy, that it will forſake its neſt if the eggs are only touched; and if the young ones are touched, it will either ſtarve them, or throw them out of the neſt. It has a delicate ſoft note; but, being a ſullen bird, it is difficult to keep it alive in confinement. It will ſing by night as well as by day, and will learn to imitate other birds.

The bill and legs of the male red-ſtart are black, and the forehead white. The crown of the head, the back part of the neck, and the back, are of a deep blue-grey: the cheeks and throat are black; the breaſt, rump, and ſides are red; the wings are brown, the two middle feathers of the tail are brown, and the others red. The top of the head and back of the female are of a deep aſh colour; the rump and tail of a duller red than thoſe of the male, and the breaſt of a paler red.

THE SKY-LARK.

THE ſky-lark and the wood-lark are the only birds that ſing as they fly: and the former begins its ſong before the earlieſt dawn.

The lark builds its neſt upon the ground, beneath ſome turf that ſerves to hide and ſhelter it: ſometimes in corn-fields, or in paſture of any kind. It lays four or five brown eggs, thickly ſtreaked with ſpots of a darker brown, and generally has young ones about the beginning of May. While the female is ſitting, the male uſually entertains her with his ſinging; and to behold the lark warbling upon the wing, raiſing its note as it ſoars, till it ſeems loſt in the immenſe heights above us, the note continuing, though the bird has diſappeared; to ſee it afterwards deſcending, with a ſwell as it comes from the clouds, yet ſinking gradually as it approaches its neſt, the ſpot where all its affections are centered, is pleaſing beyond expreſſion!

In winter, when their ſong forſakes them, they aſſemble in vaſt flocks, grow very fat, and are taken in great numbers by the bird-catchers.

The ſky-lark is about ſeven inches in length, and twelve and an half in breadth, and the weight is about one ounce and an half. The bill is ſlender, the upper chap being duſky, and the lower yellow: there is a yellow ſpot above the edges; the crown of the head is of a reddiſh brown, ſpotted with black; and the hind part

part of the head is of an aſh colour. It has the faculty of erecting the feathers of the head. The feathers on the back, and coverts of the wings, are duſky, edged with a reddiſh brown. The upper part of the breaſt is yellow, ſpotted with black; and the lower part of the body of a pale yellow. The legs are duſky, the ſoles of the feet yellow, and the hind claw very long and ſtraight. The male is diſtinguiſhed from the female by being browner, and more particularly by the length of the heel or hind claw; for Geſner affirms he has ſeen them above two inches long.

THE WOOD-LARK.

THIS bird is ſix inches and an half in length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail; and twelve inches and an half in breadth, when the wings are extended. Its weight is about an ounce and a quarter. It is inferior in ſize to the ſky-lark, and of a ſhorter and thicker form; the colours are paler, and its note leſs ſonorous, though not leſs ſweet. By theſe and the following characters it may be eaſily diſtinguiſhed from the common kind: it perches on trees, and whiſtles like the blackbird; but the ſky-lark always ſits upon the ground. The crown of the head, and the back, are marked with large black ſpots, edged with pale reddiſh brown; a whitiſh coronet of feathers ſurrounds the head, extending from eye to eye; the throat is of a yellowiſh white, ſpotted

ſpotted with black; the breaſt tinged with red, and the belly white: the coverts of the wings are brown, edged with a dulliſh white; he quill feathers are duſky, the firſt three being white at the exterior edges, and the others yellow. In the common lark the firſt and ſecond feathers of the wing are nearly of an equal length; but in the wood-lark the firſt feather of the wing is ſhorter than the ſecond: the tail is black, the legs are of a cream colour, and the hind claw is very long. Like the common lark, the wood-lark will ſing as it flies, and will alſo exert its ſinging faculties in the night. It builds on the ground in the ſame manner as the common lark, but the ſpecies is not ſo numerous. The male is diſtinguiſhed from the female by its ſuperior ſize.

The wood-lark generally lays four eggs, and produces about four young ones, which are very tender birds, and difficult to be reared; and therefore ſhould not be taken till they are well feathered: they ſhould be kept clean and warm. Some prefer the ſinging of the wood-lark to the nightingale, and in the months of May, June, and July, it is often miſtaken for that bird.

The wood-lark in its wild ſtate feeds upon beetles, caterpillars, and other inſects.

THE TIT LARK.

THE tit-lark frequents low marſhy grounds, and, like other larks, builds its neſt among the

graſs, laying five or ſix eggs, which are of a dark brown colour; and its young are fit to take about the beginning of May. Like the wood-lark, it ſits on trees, and has a remarkable fine note, greatly reſembling that of the canary-bird. It is a bird of an elegant and ſlender ſhape; five inches and a half in length, and nine in breadth. The bill is black; the back and head are of a greeniſh brown, ſpotted with black; the throat, and lower part of the belly, are white; the breaſt is yellow, ſpotted with black; the tail is duſky; the claw on the hind toe is very long, and the feet are of a pale yellow. The cock is yellower than the hen, eſpecially under the throat, on the breaſt, and legs.

This bird comes with the nightingale about the end of March, and goes away about the beginning of September.

THE CANARY-BIRD.

BY the name it appears that theſe birds came originally from the Canary iſlands, but we have them only from Germany, where they are bred in great numbers, and ſold into different parts of Europe. About a century ago they were ſold at very high prices, and kept only for the amuſement of the great. They have ſince, however, been greatly multiplied, and their price is diminiſhed in proportion.

In its native regions, the canary-bird is of a

duſky grey colour, and ſo different from thoſe uſually ſeen in Europe, that doubts have ariſen whether it be of the ſame ſpecies. With us they have that variety of colouring uſual in all domeſtic fowls; ſome being white, others mottled, and others beautifully ſhaded with green; but in this country they are more eſteemed for their note than their beauty, having a high piercing pipe, continuing for ſome time in one breath, without intermiſſion, then gradually raiſing it higher and higher, with infinite variety.

Next to the nightingale, the Canary bird is conſidered as the moſt celebrated ſongſter. In chooſing this bird, we may judge him to be beſt in health that appears lively and bold, ſtanding upright upon the perch like a ſparrow-hawk, without being intimidated at any thing that ſtirs. In obſerving him he ſhould not be approached too near, leſt a motion of the hand ſhould diſturb him; which, for a ſhort time, will make him appear ſprightly and in health; but if he is obſerved at a proper diſtance, it may ſoon be diſcovered whether it is the effect of fear, or the natural ſpirit of the bird. If he ſtands up boldly, without crouching or ſhrinking his feathers, and his eyes look cheerful, and not drowſy, there is little doubt of his being a healthy bird; but if, on the contrary, he is apt to put his head under his wing, and ſtand all of a heap, he is certainly diſordered.

Though theſe birds ſometimes breed all the year round, they moſt uſually begin to pair in April,

April, and to breed in June and Auguſt. The beſt breed is ſaid to be produced between the Engliſh and French birds. Towards the latter end of March, a cock and hen ſhould be put together in a ſmall cage: though they diſagree a little at firſt, they will ſoon become thoroughly reconciled. The ſituation of the room where they are kept, muſt not deprive them of the benefit of the morning ſun, or of the free air. The floor of the room ſhould be kept clean, and ſometimes gravel or ſifted ſand ſhould be ſtrewed over it. While the birds are pairing, they are uſually fed with ſoft meat, ſuch as bread, maw-ſeed, a little ſcalded rape-ſeed, and about a third part of an egg, obſerving to grate the bread and rape-ſeed very fine. Materials for making their neſts, ſuch as hay, wool, cotton, and hair, ſhould be placed in their apartment, in ſo looſe a manner that the birds may have no difficulty in collecting what is neceſſary for their purpoſe.

The male aſſiſts the female in building the neſt, and takes his turn with her in ſitting upon the eggs, and feeding the young. They are uſually about two or three days in making their neſt, and the female generally lays five eggs, which are hatched at the end of about fourteen days.

When the young are produced, the parents ſhould be ſupplied with a ſufficiency of ſoft food every day; and alſo with cabbage, lettuce, and chick-weed; in June, ſhepherd's purſe, and in July and Auguſt, plantane: they ſhould have no groundſil after the young are excluded.

With theſe delicacies the old ones will carefully feed their young; but when they are able to feed themſelves, they are uſually taken from the neſt, and put into cages. Their food then is the ſoft meat before mentioned, of which they ſhould have a freſh ſupply every day.

Theſe birds will produce with the goldfinch and linnet, and the offspring is called a mule-bird, becauſe, like that animal, it proves barren.

THE SWALLOW.

THE ſwallow-tribe are all known by their very large mouths, which are always kept open when they fly; their wings are immoderately long for their bulk; their plumage is gloſſed with a rich purple, and their note is a ſlight twittering, which they ſeldom exert but upon the wing. Inſects are their food, which they always purſue flying. In fine weather, therefore, when the inſects are moſt likely to be abroad, ſwallows are continually upon the wing, and purſue their prey with amazing ſwiftneſs and agility. When the ſpring begins to rouſe the inſect tribe from their annual ſtate of torpidity, the ſwallow returns from its long migration beyond the ocean. At firſt it appears but ſeldom, and flies heavily and feebly, but as the weather grows warmer, and the number of inſects increaſes, it gathers activity and ſtrength. On the approach of rain, the air, being much heavier than in clear weather, repreſſes the inſect tribe in their flight; and from the ſwallows purſuing them near

Yellow Hammer
Swallow
Swift
Snow Flake

near the earth, we are often apprized of the change that will ſpeedily enſue.

Among naturaliſts, there are three opinions concerning the manner in which the ſwallow tribes diſpoſe of themſelves, after they have fled from the countries which they make their ſummer reſidence. The firſt of theſe opinions has the utmoſt appearance of probability; which is, that they remove nearer the ſun, where they can find a continual ſupply of their natural food, and a temperature of air adapted to their conſtitutions. The ſecond is ſupported by great antiquity. Ariſtotle and Pliny are of opinion, that ſwallows do not remove to any great diſtance from their ſummer habitation, but winter in the hollows of rocks, and loſe their feathers during that period. Many ingenious men have adopted the former part of their opinion; and ſeveral proofs have lately been produced, that ſome ſpecies, at leaſt, have been diſcovered in a torpid ſtate.

We cannot but aſſent to facts, though ſeemingly contradictory to the common courſe of nature. We muſt therefore divide our belief reſpecting theſe two very different opinions, and conclude that one part of the ſwallow tribe emigrate, and that others winter at home.

The third notion is too amazing and unnatural to merit the leaſt attention. The firſt who broached the opinion of ſwallows paſſing the winter immerſed under ice, at the bottom of lakes, or beneath the water of the ſea, was Olaus Magnus, archbiſhop of Upſal, who very gravely informs us that they are frequently

found in cluſtered maſſes at the bottom of the northern lakes, mouth to mouth, wing to wing, foot to foot; and that they creep down the reeds in autumn to their ſubaqueous retreats. Extravagant as this notion is, it has been adopted by ſome of our own countrymen, whoſe faith very far exceeds ours on the ſubject.

The neſt of this bird is built with great induſtry and art, particularly that of the common ſwallow, which builds it on the tops of chimneys. The martin fixes it to the eaves of houſes, or againſt the ſides of lofty door-poſts. The goat-ſucker, it is ſaid, builds it on the bare ground. The ſwallow lays five or ſix white eggs, ſpeckled with red, and ſometimes breeds twice a-year.

The houſe, or common ſwallow, is diſtinguiſhed from all others by the extreme forkineſs of its tail, and by the red ſpot on the forehead, and under the chin. The crown of the head, the upper part of the body, and the coverts of the wings are black, gloſſed with a rich purpliſh blue. The breaſt and belly are white, tinged with red; the tail is black, and the two middle feathers plain, the others being marked tranſverſely with a white ſpot near their ends. The tongue is ſhort, broad, and of a yellowiſh colour, as well as the palate; but the other parts of the mouth are blackiſh. The eyes are pretty large, and the iris is of a hazel colour.

THE MARTIN.

THE martin is ſmaller than the former, and its tail is much leſs forked. The head and upper part of the body, except the rump, is black, gloſſed with blue; the breaſt, belly, and rump are white; and the feet are covered with a ſhort white down. This bird builds, as we have already obſerved, under the eaves of houſes, and is about ſix inches in length, and ten and an half in breadth, when the wings are extended.

THE SWIFT, OR BLACK MARTIN.

THIS ſpecies is the largeſt of the ſwallow kind; but its weight is exceedingly ſmall in proportion to its extent of wing; for it only weighs one ounce, and the extent of its wings is eighteen inches: the length of the bird is about eight inches. It breeds under the eaves of houſes, in ſteeples, and other lofty buildings. It is entirely of a ſooty colour, with a greeniſh caſt, except that the chin is marked with a white ſpot. The head is large, the mouth extremely wide, and the bill is very ſmall and weak. It is with difficulty that this bird can raiſe itſelf from the ground, on account of the length of its wings, and the ſhortneſs of its feet; for which reaſon it generally reſts by climbing againſt ſome wall or other building,

building, from which it can eaſily diſengage itſelf.

The ſwift retires from this country about the middle of Auguſt, it being the firſt of the ſwallow kind that leaves us.

THE CHINESE SWALLOW.

THIS bird reſembles the common ſwallow in ſhape, and, in breeding time, quits the inland parts, and goes to the ſea ſide; where it builds an extraordinary neſt, which is reckoned delicious eating in China. Theſe neſts are ſometimes preſerved as a ſweetmeat, and ſent over to Europe as a great curioſity. We have no particular deſcription of this bird, but the Chineſe carry on a conſiderable trade in their neſts, and ſell them in many parts of the Eaſt-Indies. They are about the ſize of a gooſe-egg, and of a ſubſtance reſembling iſinglaſs. It is cuſtomary to diſſolve one of theſe neſts in broth, and then it is thought preferable to any ſauce that can be produced.

THE GOAT-SUCKER.

THIS ſpecies of ſwallow does not continue long with us: it never makes its appearance here till about the latter end of May, and retires about the middle of Auguſt. They are often ſeen in the woody and mountainous parts of

Male Goatsucker
Female Goatsucker

of Great Britain: they begin their flight for prey towards the evening, and make a loud and ſingular noiſe while they are on the wing. When perched, they have no other note than a ſmall ſqueak, repeated four or five times together. The goat-ſucker feeds on moths, gnats, and chaffers. It uſually lays two eggs, and ſometimes three, on the bare ground: they are long, ſlender, and whitiſh, marbled with reddiſh brown. The weight of the goat-ſucker is two ounces and an half, the length ten inches and an half, and the breadth twenty-two inches.

THE FLY-CATCHER.

THE weight of this bird is about twelve drams; its head is of a deep brown, mixed with aſh colour, and the cheeks are marked with oblong ſpots of a dirty white. The back and coverts of the wings are duſky, edged with reddiſh brown. The quill feathers and the tail are duſky: the rump is brown, tinged with green; the throat and the breaſt are of a dull aſh colour; the belly is of a dirty white; and the ſides, thighs, and vent feathers are of a pale tawny brown. The legs and feet are of a dark fleſh colour. This bird frequents low hedges, particularly in gardens. It builds its neſt in a ſmall buſh, and lays four or five eggs of a fine pale blue colour. Its note is ſhort, but very ſweet.

THE

The HEDGE-SPARROW.

THE weight of this bird is about twelve drams: its head is of a deep brown, mixed with aſh colour, and the cheeks are marked with oblong ſpots of dirty white; the back and coverts of the wings are duſky, edged with reddiſh brown; the quill feathers and the tail are duſky; and the rump is brown, tinged with green. The throat and breaſt are of a dull aſh colour, and the belly is of a dirty white. The ſides, thighs, and vent feathers are of a pale tawny brown. The legs are of a dull fleſh colour. This bird is as well known as any of our ſmall birds, and it builds ſo conſpicuouſly in ſmall buſhes, that any boy who ſearches the hedges, can give an account of its neſt, eggs, &c. It lays four or five eggs of a fine pale blue colour. The male has a ſhort, but very ſweet note during a very ſmall ſpace in the ſpring; and if brought up under ſome fine ſong-bird, he will take his ſong, and give great ſatisfaction.

The WREN.

THE wren weighs about three drams, and is four inches and an half in length from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail. The head and upper part of the body is of a deep reddiſh brown; and above each eye is a ſtroke of white: the back, the coverts of the wings, and

and the tail, are marked with ſlender tranſverſe black lines; and the quill feathers with bars of black and red. The throat is of a yellowiſh white. The belly and ſides are croſſed with duſky and pale reddiſh brown lines. The tail is croſſed with duſky bars. The wren may be placed among the fineſt of our ſinging birds, though its note continues only during the breeding ſeaſon. It makes a curious neſt of an oval ſhape, very deep, and with a ſmall hole in the middle for egreſs and regreſs: but this bird lays a great number of eggs, generally from twelve to eighteen; and theſe are white, ſprinkled all over with pale reddiſh ſpots. It breeds twice a-year, namely, in April and June, and the young ſhould be fed and reared like young nightingales.

The wren uſually creeps about hedges and holes, making but ſhort flights, and, if it be driven from the hedges, may be eaſily tired and run down.

THE GOLDEN-CRESTED WREN.

THIS is the ſmalleſt of all the Britiſh birds, not weighing above twenty-ſix grains. It is about three inches and an half in length, and five inches in breadth: it is diſtinguiſhable from all other birds, not only by its ſize, but by the beautiful ſcarlet marked on the head, bounded by a fine yellow line on each ſide. It frequents woods, and is uſually ſeen in oak-trees.

THE

THE WHEAT-EAR.

THE head and back of the male wheat-ear are of a light grey, tinged with red; and over each eye paſſes a white line; beneath which a broad black ſtroke paſſes each eye to the hind-part of the head: the rump, and lower half of the tail are white, and the upper half is black; the breaſt and belly are white, tinged with yellow: the quill-feathers are black, edged with reddiſh brown. The colours of the female are duller, and ſhe wants the black ſtroke acroſs the eyes.

Theſe birds begin to viſit us about the middle of March, and continue coming till the beginning of May; it being very remarkable that the females arrive about a fortnight before the males. They frequent warrens, downs, and the edges of hills, eſpecially thoſe that are fenced with ſtone-walls. They breed in cliffs, in old rabbet-burrows, and ſometimes under old timber, making their neſt of dried graſs and horſe-hair, and laying from ſix to eight eggs of a light blue colour. They grow very fat in autumn, and are thought ſo great a delicacy as to be little inferior to an ortolan. They are taken in ſnares in great quantities by the ſhepherds about Eaſt-Bourne, in Suſſex, which neighbourhood they frequent, becauſe it abounds with a certain fly which are very numerous about the adjacent hills, drawn thither by the wild thyme with which they are covered, which is not only a favourite food of

that

that inſect, but the plant on which it depoſits its eggs.

Wheat-ears abound in many other parts of Suſſex, as well as in the neighbourhood of Eaſt-Bourne. During the watering-ſeaſon at Brighthelmſtone, the ladies and gentlemen, in their perambulations, frequently find birds in ſnares that have been laid by the ſhepherds; theſe they always take, and depoſit a penny in the hole for every bird, as a valuable conſideration. This indeed is the ſettled price between the ſhepherds and the nobility and gentry who frequent Brighthelmſtone.

THE STONE-CHATTER.

THIS is a reſtleſs noiſy bird, and, perched upon a buſh, chatters almoſt inceſſantly. The head, neck, and throat are black; but the latter has a white bar on each ſide, and ſeems, at firſt ſight, to be encircled with white: the feathers on the back are black, edged with tawny; but the ſides juſt above the rump are white: the breaſt is of a deep reddiſh yellow, and the belly ſomewhat lighter; the quill feathers are duſky, edged with a dull red. The head of the female is of an iron-colour ſpotted with black; and the colours in general are leſs vivid. The legs in both ſexes are black.

The WATER-WAGTAIL.

THE water-wagtail weighs about ſix drams, and is in length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, eight inches; but the breadth, when the wings are extended, is eleven inches. The head, back, and neck, as far as the breaſt, are black: in ſome the chin is white, and the throat marked with a black creſcent. The breaſt and belly are uſually white, but ſometimes yellow; the quill feathers are duſky; and the coverts are black, tipt and edged with white. The tail is very long, and continually in motion, from which circumſtance it derives its name. The exterior feather on each ſide is white, the lower part of the inner web excepted, which is duſky: the others are black. The bill, the inſide of the mouth, and the legs, are black.

The water-wagtail frequents the ſides of ponds and ſmall ſtreams, feeding on inſects and worms. In ſome places they build their neſts under the eaves of houſes, and in holes of the walls of buildings, and lay four or five eggs.

The GROSSBEAK.

THIS bird is alſo called a hawfinch; it is ſeven inches in length, and thirteen in breadth, and weighs almoſt two ounces: the bill is in ſhape like a funnel, ſtrong, thick, and of a dull pale

pale pink colour; at the baſe of which are ſome orange-coloured feathers: the irides are grey; and the cheeks and the crown of the head are of a fine deep bay: a black line extends from the bill to the eyes; the breaſt and belly are of a dirty fleſh colour. The neck is aſh-coloured, and back and coverts of the wings of a deep brown; thoſe of the tail being of a yellowiſh bay; the great quill feathers are black, ſpotted with white on the inner webs. The tail is ſhort, having white ſpots on the inner ſides, and the legs are of a fleſh colour. The great peculiarity of this bird is the form of the ends of the quill feathers; which reſembles, as Mr. Edwards properly obſerves, the figure of ſome of the ancient battle-axes: theſe feathers are gloſſed over with a rich blue, but are leſs conſpicuous in the female, her head being of a dull olive, tinged with brown.

The groſsbeak is not regularly migrant, viſiting us only in hard winters: they feed on berries, and even on the kernels of the ſtrongeſt ſtones, ſuch as thoſe of cherries and almonds, which they crack with the utmoſt eaſe; their bills, from their ſtrength and thickneſs, being well adapted to that work. Theſe birds are common in Italy and Germany, where they live in the woods in ſummer, and breed in hollow trees, laying five or ſix eggs; but they come down into the plains in winter. Their legs and feet are of a pale fleſh colour, and the claws are pretty ſtrong and large.

The BULL-FINCH.

BULL-FINCHES are ſo called from their heads, which are black, and, in proportion to their bodies, large. In ſome parts of England they are called popes, in others thick-bills, and in others hoops. They are very docile birds, the hen learning after the pipe or whiſtle as well as the cock; but its own wild note is not in the leaſt muſical: they excel moſt birds, however, in what is taught them, and they are remarkable for not forgetting what they have once learned, though they ſhould be placed among ſeveral other ſinging birds in the ſame room. Some have even been taught to ſpeak ſeveral words at command with great propriety of articulation.

The male is diſtinguiſhed from the female by the ſuperior blackneſs of its crown, and by the rich crimſon that adorns the cheeks, breaſt, belly, and throat; thoſe of the female being of a dirty buff colour: the bill is ſhort, black, and ſtrong; the eyes are of a hazel colour, and the head (as already obſerved) is large in proportion to the ſize of the body, which is nearly that of the common ſparrow. Part of the neck, ſhoulders, and back, are of a bluiſh aſh colour, ſhaded with red, and the belly and rump are white. Some of the quill feathers have their outward webs red, and the inner of a fine gloſſy black; others are black with duſky edges, and of a bluiſh gloſs; and others have their outward edges

edges white, forming a ſort of white line or croſs-bar upon each wing. The tail is of a ſhining black, and about two inches long; the legs are of a duſky colour, and the claws are black.

In the ſpring theſe birds frequent our gardens, and feed upon the tender buds of fruit-trees, ſuch as the apple, pear, peach, and other garden-trees. They breed about the latter end of May, or the beginning of June, at which time they are ſeldom ſeen near the houſes; always chooſing ſome retired place to breed in. The female lays four or five eggs of a bluiſh colour, ſpotted at the largeſt end with large dark brown, and faint reddiſh ſpots.

Young bull-finches ſhould not be taken till they are pretty well feathered; that is, when they are twelve or fourteen days old. They ſhould be kept warm and clean, and fed every two hours from morning till night; but they muſt have but little at a time. Their food ſhould be rape-ſeed, ſoaked in water eight or ten hours, and then ſcalded and bruiſed: this ſhould be mixed with an equal quantity of white bread ſoaked in water, ſtrained, and afterwards boiled thick with milk. It ſhould be freſh every day, for if it is ſour it will do the birds an injury.

THE SPARROW.

THIS is uſually called the houſe-ſparrow. It has a very thick ſtrong bill, about half an inch in length, and the eyes are of a hazel-

colour. The crown of the head is grey, and under each eye is a black ſpot; and above the corner of each is a broad bright bay mark, which ſurrounds the hind-part of the head. The cheeks are white, the chin and under-ſide of the neck are black, the latter being edged with white; and the belly is of a dirty white: the back is ſpotted with red and black, and the tail is duſky. The lower mandible of the bill of the female is white. But this bird is ſo univerſally known that it would be impertinent to give any farther deſcription. It is ſix inches and an half in length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, and weighs ſomewhat more than an ounce. It feeds upon grain, and does conſiderable miſchief in the corn-fields.

Sparrows, which are very numerous in this country, are ſhort-lived birds. They breed early in the ſpring, making their neſts under the eaves of houſes, in thatches, in holes of walls, and frequently in the neſts of the martin, after expelling the owner. Linnæus tells us (upon the authority of Albertus Magnus) that the martin does not ſuffer this inſult to paſs unrevenged; the injured bird aſſembles its companions, who aſſiſt him in plaiſtering up the entrance with dirt; after which they fly away twittering in triumph, leaving the intruder to periſh in his muddy priſon.

THE WOOD-SPARROW.

THE wood-ſparrow is of a ruſty iron-colour on the crown of the head, and has a white ſpace about the eyes. It has alſo blackiſh tranſverſe lines running along the chin, and the lower part of the neck.

THE GREEN-FINCH.

THE green-finch is ſomewhat larger than the common ſparrow: the head and back are of a yellowiſh green. The upper chap of the bill is of a duſky colour, and the lower whitiſh. The rump is of a fine yellow, but the breaſt is paler, and ſhaded with green: the belly is white. The edges of the outmoſt quill feathers are yellow, the next green, and the fartheſt grey. The tail is about two inches long, and a little forked: the two middle feathers are duſky; and the exterior webs of the four outmoſt feathers on both ſides the tail are yellow. The colours of the female are much leſs vivid than in the male.

Theſe birds are very common in this country. They have young ones about the middle of May: they make their neſts in hedges, which are very large conſidering the ſize of the inhabitants. The female lays five or ſix eggs, of a pale green colour, ſprinkled with ſmall reddiſh ſpots, which are moſt numerous at the large end.

end. The green-finch, from the end of the bill to the extremity of the tail, is about ſix inches and an half, the bill is half an inch in length, and the weight of the bird is ſixteen drams.

Though green-finches are frequently kept in cages, they are not much eſteemed for their ſinging: yet ſome of them, if brought up from the neſt, will learn to pipe and whiſtle, and to imitate the ſong of moſt other birds. They are valued by ſome for their facility in learning to ring the bells in a cage contrived for that purpoſe. The green-finch is very eaſily tamed, and the young are fit to be taken at ten days old.

THE GOLD-FINCH.

THE gold-finch is a little leſs than the houſe-ſparrow, weighing about half an ounce; and its length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, is five inches and an half: the breadth, when the wings are extended, is nine inches. It is one of the moſt beautiful of the hard-billed ſmall birds, whether we conſider its colours, the elegance of its form, or the muſic of its note. The bill is white, tipt with black, the baſe being ſurrounded with a ring of rich ſcarlet feathers: a black line extends from the corners of the mouth to the eyes: the cheeks are white, and from the top of the head a broad black line paſſes on each ſide almoſt to the neck. The hind-part of the head is white: the back, rump, and breaſt, are of a fine pale tawny brown, rather

ther lighter on the two latter. The belly is white, and the wings and tail black, but the points of the chief feathers are white in both: a beautiful yellow ſtripe runs acroſs the wings. The tail is about two inches long, and of a black colour, but often the feathers are marked with a white ſpot near their ends. The legs are white.

The cock is diſtinguiſhed from the hen by the feathers on the ridges of the wings, which are of a deep black, and thoſe of the hen are of a duſky brown: the black and yellow in the wings of the female are alſo leſs brilliant than in thoſe of the male. The young bird, before it moults, is grey on the head, and is therefore termed a *grey-pate* by the bird-catchers.

The gold-finch begins to build in April, when the fruit-trees are in bloſſom: its neſt is ſmall, but extremely beautiful. This bird lays five or ſix white eggs, marked with deep purple ſpots on the upper end. It is fond of orchards, and frequently builds its neſt in an apple or pear-tree.

Gold-finches are of a mild and gentle nature, and almoſt as ſoon as they are taken are eaſily prevailed on to eat and drink; they are alſo ſoon reconciled to their impriſonment in a cage; and after they have remained there a conſiderable time, they become ſo fond of it, that if the door of the cage is opened they will not fly away, but uſually fly to the cage for ſhelter if any thing ſhould terrify them.

In ſome parts of England they are called *draw-waters*, from their facility in learning to draw

draw their water when they are inclined to drink; for which purpoſe they are ſometimes furniſhed with a little ivory-bucket, faſtened to a ſmall chain. It is entertaining to ſee with what dexterity theſe little creatures pull up their bucket, drink, and return it. They are much delighted with viewing themſelves in a looking-glaſs, which is ſometimes fixed to the back of their bucket-board. They will ſit upon their perch, pruning and dreſſing themſelves with the greateſt care imaginable, looking inceſſantly in the glaſs to ſee that every feather is placed in the niceſt order.

The gold-finch is a long-lived bird, and ſometimes reaches the age of twenty years. The young are tender, and therefore ſhould not be taken out of their neſts till they are pretty well feathered. If a young gold-finch is brought up under a Canary bird, a wood-lark, or any other ſinging bird, he will readily take their ſong. A cock gold-finch, bred from the neſt, will couple with a hen Canary bird, and their eggs will produce birds between both kinds; partaking of the ſong and colours of both; but the young will be barren.

THE CHAFFINCH.

THE chaffinch is a hardy bird, about the ſize of the bull-finch. It lays four or five eggs of a whitiſh colour, tinged and ſpotted with deep purple.

This bird is laviſh in its ſong, and, when brought

brought up from the neſt, will ſing ſix or ſeven months in the year; but in its wild ſtate not above three months. It has a ſtrong bill of a pale blue colour, and black at the tip, as well as at the upper part: the crown of the head, the hind part and ſides of the neck are of a bluiſh grey; the breaſt is red; the ſides and belly are white, tinged with red; the upper part of the back is of a deep tawny colour; the lower part, and rump, are green. The colours are much ſtronger and more lively in the male than in the female; and ſome of the quill-feathers have white webs, with green edges, ſhaded with yellow: the ſmall feathers on the ridges of the wings are blue, ſpotted with white. The tail is black, except the outmoſt feather, which is marked obliquely with a white line from top to bottom; and the next, which has a white ſpot on the end of the inner web. The legs are duſky. The female wants the red on the breaſt, and other parts; the head and upper part of her body are of a dirty green; and the belly and breaſt of a dirty white.

Some bird-catchers, not ſatisfied with depriving theſe little innocent creatures of their liberty, exerciſe the cruelty of putting out the eyes of the chaffinch, becauſe they ſay he is then more attentive, and learns more expeditiouſly: this wicked experiment is done with a wire made almoſt red hot. It is however affirmed, that this cruel operation anſwers no other purpoſe than that of rendering the operator deteſtable, for rewarding the bird's endeavours to pleaſe him with temporary torture and perpetual blindneſs.

THE BRAMBLING.

THIS is a common bird in this country, but is chiefly found in the woody parts: it is larger than the chaffinch; the top of the head is of a gloſſy black, edged with a yelloviſh brown; the feathers on the back are of the ſame colour, but the edges are more deeply bordered with brown; the chin, throat, and breaſt, are of an orange colour: the leſſer coverts of the wings are of the ſame colour; but thoſe on the quill-feathers are barred with black, and tipt with orange. The tail is a little forked, and the exterior web of the outer feather white: the others are black, except the two middle ones, which are edged and tipt with aſh colour.

THE LINNET.

THE length of this bird, including bill and tail, is five inches and an half; of which the former is half an inch, and the latter two inches and a quarter. It weighs about ten drams. The bill is duſky, but in ſpring it aſſumes a bluiſh caſt: it is thick, ſtrong, and about half an inch in length: the head is variegated with aſh colour and black, and the back is of a blackiſh red; the bottom of the breaſt and the lower part of the throat are of a beautiful red, and the edges of its feathers of a yelloviſh red: the tail is a little forked, and of a brown-

brown-colour, edged with white, the two middle feathers excepted, which are bordered with a dulliſh red. Theſe birds are much eſteemed for their ſong; they feed on ſeeds of different kinds, which they peel before they eat: the ſeed of the *linum* or flax is their favourite; from whence aroſe the name of the linnet tribe.

They uſually build in a thick buſh or hedge, particularly among white thorn or furze, and lay four or five whitiſh eggs, ſpotted like thoſe of the gold-finch. The young ones are hatched about the latter end of April, or the beginning of May, and may be taken when they are about ten days old. They muſt be kept very warm, and fed every two hours, from ſix in the morning till ſix or ſeven in the evening.

The cock may be known from the hen by the feathers on his back, which are much browner than thoſe of the hen; and by the white of his wing, the white in the wing of the hen being much leſs and fainter.

The linnet may be taught to pipe or whiſtle, and is eaſily inſtructed in the ſong of any other bird; but as its own note is ſo very fine, that trouble is unneceſſary; the natural note of any good ſinging-bird being always to be preferred.

THE REDPOLE.

THIS bird is ſmaller than the former, and has a bill like that of a chaffinch: the head is aſh colour, except that it has a blood-coloured ſpot on the forehead. The breaſt is tinged

with a fine roſe colour. The neck is of an aſh colour: the back, ſcapular feathers, and coverts of the wings are of a bright reddiſh brown; the ſides are yellow, and the middle of the belly white. The tail, like that of the former, is forked, and of a duſky colour, edged on both ſides with white. The head of the female is aſh colour, ſpotted with black: the back and ſcapulars are of a dull browniſh red; and the breaſt and ſides of a dirty yellow, ſtreaked with duſky lines.

This is a familiar bird, and is as cheerful five minutes after it is caught, as a French priſoner is ſaid to be after the ſame ſhort captivity. It has a pretty chattering kind of ſong, and is often kept in cages. It ſhould be fed with the ſame ſort of ſeeds as the common linnet or chaffinch. Theſe birds are frequent on our ſea-coaſts, and, in flight time, are often taken near London.

THE BUNTING

IS larger than the common lark, but not very different in colour. The bill of this bird is ſingularly conſtructed; the ſides of the upper chap form a ſharp angle, bending inwards towards the lower; and in the roof of the former is a hard knob, fitted for bruiſing corn or other hard ſeeds. This bird is ſomewhat more of a brick colour than the lark, and its chin, breaſt, and belly, are of a yellowiſh white. The throat is marked with oblong black ſpots, and the tail

is

is about three inches long, and of a duſky red. The legs and claws are of a duſky colour.

THE YELLOW-HAMMER.

THE yellow-hammer is about the ſize of a chaffinch, or rather larger. The bill is of a duſky hue, and the crown of the head of a pale yellow; ſpotted with brown in ſome, and plain in others: the hind part of the neck is tinged with green; the chin and throat are yellow; and the breaſt is marked with an orange red: the belly is yellow, and the leſſer coverts of the wings are green; the others are duſky, edged with ruſt colour: and the back is of the ſame colours. The quill feathers of the wings are duſky, ſome of which are edged with green, and others with a dirty white. The tail, which is about three inches long, is a little forked at the end; the edges of ſome of the feathers being green, and ſome marked with white ſpots near the tips. The feet are of a light brown, and the claws are black.

It makes a flat neſt on the ground on the ſides of banks or hedges, and generally under a buſh, but ſometimes near a river or brook, and lays ſix or ſeven white eggs, veined with a dark purple. This is a very common ſpecies, and in the winter frequents farm-yards with other ſmall birds.

The male, in a wild ſtate, ſings very prettily; and though it is ſeldom kept in a cage, yet makes no contemptible figure there; for, ex-

cluſive of its ſong, its fine feathers are ſome recommendation. The female is of a duller colour all over the body than the male, and thoſe parts which are of a fine yellow in the latter, are of a dirty green in the former.

THE REED-SPARROW.

THIS bird is about the ſize of a chaffinch; it has a ſhort black bill, the edges of which are turned a little inwards; ſo that the tongue lies buried in a ſmall hollow like a funnel. The head, chin, and throat, of the male are black; and at each corner of the mouth a white ring commences, which encircles the head. The back, covert feathers of the wings, and the ſcapular feathers, are black, deeply bordered with red. The belly is white; the two middle feathers of the tail are black, bordered with red, and the three next are wholly black. The head of the female is ruſt colour, ſpotted with black, and ſhe wants the white ring round the neck.

This bird frequents the ſides of rivers and marſhy places, and delights in being among reeds, from whence it takes its name. The ſituation of its neſt is remarkably contrived: it is faſtened to four reeds, and ſuſpended like a hammock about three feet above the water; the materials of which the neſt conſiſts are decayed ruſhes, fine bents, and hairs. The reed-ſparrow lays four eggs of a pale blue, marked with irregular purpliſh veins, eſpecially on the larger end. It is much admired for its ſong, and, like the nightingale, ſings in the night.

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THE TIT-MOUSE.

THIS bird is alſo called the ox-eye: it is ſix inches in length, nine inches in breadth, and weighs about an ounce. The bill is ſtraight, black, and half an inch in length: the tongue is broad, ending in four filaments; the head and throat are black; the cheeks white; the back and coverts of the wings green. The belly is of a yellowiſh green, divided in the center, by a line of black, extending to the vent: the rump is of a bluiſh grey; and the quill feathers are duſky, tipt with blue and white. The leſſer coverts are blue, and the greater are tipt with white. The tail is about two inches and an half long, and of a black colour, except on the outward edges, which are blue.

Though our gardens are ſometimes viſited by this bird, it chiefly inhabits woods; where it makes its neſt in hollow trees, and lays nine or ten eggs. Tit-mice feed on inſects which they find in the bark of trees; but, in the ſpring, they do conſiderable miſchief in fruit-gardens, by deſtroying the tender buds. Like wood-peckers, they are perpetually running up and down the trunks of trees in purſuit of food.

THE HUMMING-BIRD.

THOUGH this ſpecies is the leaſt, it is certainly the moſt beautiful of all birds.

The ſmalleſt of this claſs is about the ſize of an hazel-nut: the feathers on the wings and tail are black; thoſe on the body, and under the wings, are a mixture of green and brown, gloſſed with a beautiful red caſt: the head is adorned with a creſt, which is green at the bottom, and of a bright yellow or gold colour at the top. The bill is black, ſtraight, and ſlender.

The larger humming-bird is without a creſt on its head, and is about half the ſize of a common wren: from the throat, half way down the belly, it is covered with changeable crimſon-coloured feathers, which, in different lights, appear in a variety of different colours. The heads of both theſe birds are ſmall, ſtudded with very little ſparkling black eyes.

As ſoon as the ſun is riſen, variety of humming birds are ſeen fluttering about the flowers, without ever lighting upon them. The rapidity of the motion of their wings is ſo great, that it is impoſſible to diſcern their colours, except by their glittering: they are perpetually on the wing, viſiting flower after flower, and extracting its honey. For this purpoſe, nature has furniſhed them with a forky tongue, that enters the cup of the flower, and procures the nectar upon which alone they

they ſubſiſt. They have the name of humming-birds from the ſound occaſioned by the rapid motion of their wings.

The neſt of this bird is worthy of admiration: it is ſuſpended in the air, at the point of the twigs of an orange, a citron, or a pomegranate tree, and conſiſts of moſs, the fibres of vegetables, and cotton; it is admirably contrived, and about the ſize of half an hen's egg. In this the female lays two eggs, about the ſize of ſmall peas, which are of a pure white, with a few yellowiſh ſpots. On theſe ſhe continues to ſit twelve days, at which time the young ones are excluded, and are about the ſize of a blue-bottle fly. At firſt they are bare, afterwards they become cloathed with down, which is at length ſucceeded by feathers.

On the continent of America, at Jamaica, and Surinam, theſe birds continue to flutter the year round; for in thoſe warm latitudes, where they have always plenty of flowers, there can be no deficiency of food. But in the iſlands of the Antilles, when the winter ſeaſon approaches, they retire, and, as ſome imagine, continue in a torpid ſtate during the ſeverity of that ſeaſon.

Beſides the humming noiſe produced by their wings, travellers aſſure us that theſe birds have a little interrupted chirrup; and Labat aſſerts that they have a moſt pleaſing melancholy melody in their voices, though ſmall and proportioned to the organs that produce it.

Of BIRDS of the CRANE KIND,

The CRANE.

ACCORDING to Briſſon, the crane is three feet four inches from the tip to the tail, and four feet from the head to the toe. It is a tall, ſlender bird, with a long neck and long legs. The top of the head is covered with black briſtles, and the back of it is bald and red, which is ſufficient to diſtinguiſh this bird from the ſtork, to which it is nearly allied in ſize and figure. The plumage is aſh-coloured; and two large tufts of feathers ſpring from the pinion of each wing. Theſe reſemble hair, and are finely curled at the ends, which the bird has a power of erecting and depreſſing at pleaſure.

The crane is a wandering, ſociable bird, that ſubſiſts chiefly upon vegetables, and is known in every country of Europe except our own. As birds of paſſage, they are ſeen to depart and return regularly at thoſe ſeaſons when their proviſion invites or repels them.

They were formerly known in this iſland, and held in great eſtimation for the delicacy of their fleſh: there was even a penalty upon ſuch as deſtroyed their eggs; but they are now conſidered all over Europe as wretched eating.

The crane's favourite abode is the cold Arctic region. They come down into the more ſouthern parts of Europe, rather as viſitors than inhabitants; and it is amazing to conceive

conceive the heights to which they aſcend when they take theſe journies. Their note is remarkably loud, and is often heard in the clouds when the bird itſelf is inviſible. Though unſeen themſelves, however, in theſe aerial journies, they have a diſtinct viſion of every object below them. They govern and direct their flight by their cries; and exhort each other to proceed, or to deſcend, when opportunities for depredation preſent themſelves. Their voice is the loudeſt of all the feathered tribe; and its peculiar clangor ariſes from the very extraordinary length and contortion of the wind-pipe.

As theſe birds riſe but heavily, they are extremely ſhy, and ſeldom ſuffer mankind to approach them. Their depredations are uſually made in the darkeſt nights, when they ſometimes viſit a field of corn, and trample it down, as if a thouſand oxen had croſſed over it. But though corn is the favourite food of this bird, there is hardly any thing that comes amiſs to it. It is peaceful, both in its own ſociety, and with reſpect to thoſe of the foreſt. Though ſo large in appearance, it is ſometimes purſued and diſabled by a little falcon. It is an animal eaſily tamed, and, according to Albertus Magnus, has a particular affection for man. The female, which is eaſily diſtinguiſhed from the male, by not being bald behind, lays no more than two eggs at a time, which are like thoſe of a gooſe in ſize, but of a bluiſh colour. As ſoon as the young ones are capable of flying, the parents forſake them to

ſhift

ſhift for themſelves, after firſt leading them to the places where their food is moſt eaſily found. As they grow old, their plumage becomes darker. It is not certainly known how long a crane will live; but, as a proof of its longevity, Aldrovandus aſſures us, that a friend of his kept one tame for above forty years. The common people of every country bear the crane a compaſſionate regard to this day. In ſome countries it is conſidered as an heinous offence to kill a crane, and though the laws may not puniſh the offender, the people ſeldom fail to reſent the injury.

THE STORK.

AT a tranſient view the ſtork might be confounded with the crane. It is of the ſame ſize, and has the ſame formation as to the bill, neck, legs, and body, but it is rather more corpulent. The colour of the crane is aſh and black; that of the ſtork is white and brown: the nails of the toes of the ſtork are alſo very peculiar, not being clawed like thoſe of other birds, but flat like the nails of a man. The crane has a loud piercing voice; the ſtork is ſilent, and produces no other noiſe than the clacking of its under chap againſt the upper.

It has often been remarked, that the ſocial affections are found to be ſtronger in their deſcent than their aſcent; that the love of parents to their children, for inſtance, is commonly

Stork

monly more ardent than that of children for their parents; though, from the ſtate of things, and from the obligations which children owe their parents, one might reaſonably expect it to be otherwiſe. There is, however, one creature which contradicts this almoſt general rule in the animal world; and which is as remarkable for its love to its parents, as other creatures are for their love to their young: this is the ſtork, whoſe very name in the Hebrew language [*cheſidah*] ſignifies mercy or piety.

The ſtork is a bird of paſſage, and is ſpoken of as ſuch in ſcripture: ſee Jerem. viii. 7. "The ſtork knoweth her appointed time," &c. They go away in the night to the ſouthern countries.

This bird has a very long beak, and long red legs. It feeds upon ſerpents, frogs, and inſects: as it ſeeks for theſe in watery places, nature has provided it with long legs; and as it flies away, as well as the crane and heron, to its neſt with its prey, the bill is ſtrong and jagged, the ſharp hooks of which enable it to detain its prey, which it might otherwiſe be difficult to hold. The ſtorks dig with their bills into the earth for ſerpents and adders, which, however large, they convey to their young, to whom the poiſon of thoſe animals is perfectly inoffenſive. The plumage of the ſtork would be quite white, if it was not that the extremity of its wings are black, and alſo ſome ſmall part of its head and thighs. It lays

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but four eggs, and ſits for the ſpace of thirty days.

But that which renders it the moſt remarkable is its love to its parents, whom it never forſakes, but tenderly feeds and defends, even to death. The Dutch are very ſolicitous for the preſervation of the ſtork in every part of their republic. This bird ſeems to have taken refuge among their towns; and builds on the tops of their houſes without any moleſtation. There it is ſeen reſting familiarly in their ſtreets, and protected as well by the laws as by the affections of the people.

THE HERON.

THOUGH the crane, the ſtork, and the heron, bear a ſtrong affinity to each other, the heron may be diſtinguiſhed from them, not only by its ſize, which is much leſs, and its bill, which in proportion is much longer, but particularly by the middle claw on each foot, which is toothed like a ſaw for the better ſeizing and ſecuring its ſlippery prey.

In proportion to its bulk, the heron is remarkably light, and ſeldom exceeds three pounds and an half in weight; though its length is three feet, and its breadth upwards of five feet. Its body is very ſmall, and its ſkin remarkably thin: the bill is five inches long, from the point to the baſe: the claws are ſharp and long, and the middlemoſt is toothed like a ſaw,

Common Heron

a ſaw. But, notwithſtanding it is thus formidably armed, it is ſo cowardly as to fly at the approach of a ſparrow-hawk. It muſt be capable of enduring a long abſtinence, as its food, which is fiſh and frogs, cannot be readily procured at all times. The heron wades as far as he can go into the water, where he impatiently waits the approach of his prey; which he darts upon with unerring aim as ſoon as it appears in ſight. In this manner he is ſaid to deſtroy more in one week, than an otter in three months. Several gentlemen who kept tame herons, to try what quantity one of them would eat in a day, have put ſeveral ſmaller roach and dace in a tub, and they have found him eat fifty in a day, one day with another. In this manner a ſingle heron will deſtroy fifteen thouſand carp in a ſingle half-year.

Though the heron lives chiefly among pools and marſhes, it builds on the tops of the higheſt trees, and ſometimes on cliffs hanging over the ſea. The neſt is compoſed of ſticks, lined with wool; and the female lays four large eggs of a pale green colour. Such, however, is the indolence of this bird, that it never takes the trouble of building a neſt for itſelf, if it can procure one deſerted by the owl or crow. Indeed it uſually enlarges it, and lines it within ſide; and, if the original poſſeſſor happens to renew his claim, the uſurper treats him very roughly, and drives him away for his impertinence.

The heron was formerly much eſteemed as food, and made a favourite diſh at the table of the great, but now it is thought deteſtable eating. It is ſaid to be very long lived; and Mr. Keyſler's account ſays, ſixty years is no very uncommon age.

THE GREAT WHITE HERON, OR EGRET.

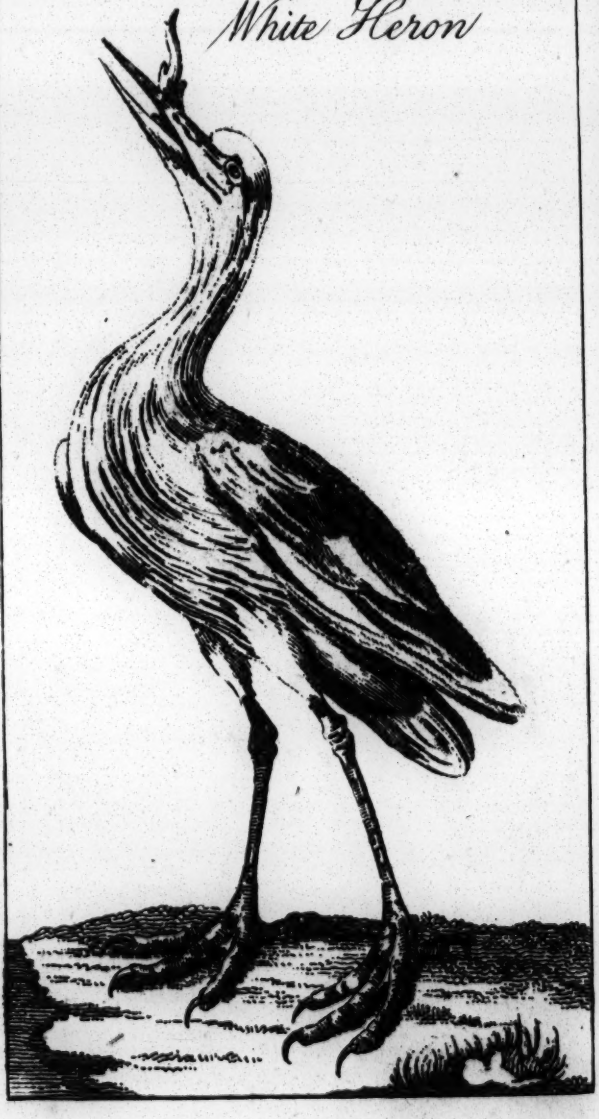
THE length of this bird, from the tip of the bill to the end of the claws, is four feet and an half; and to the end of the tail three feet and a quarter: the breadth, with extended wings, is five feet and an half; and the weight about two pounds and an half. This bird is entirely white, by which it may be diſtinguiſhed from the common heron; it may alſo be diſtinguiſhed by its ſize, which is ſmaller, and by the length of its tail. This heron is not often ſeen in England.

There is a bird of this kind, called the Leſſer White Heron, which only differs from the preceding in ſize, and in having a creſt.

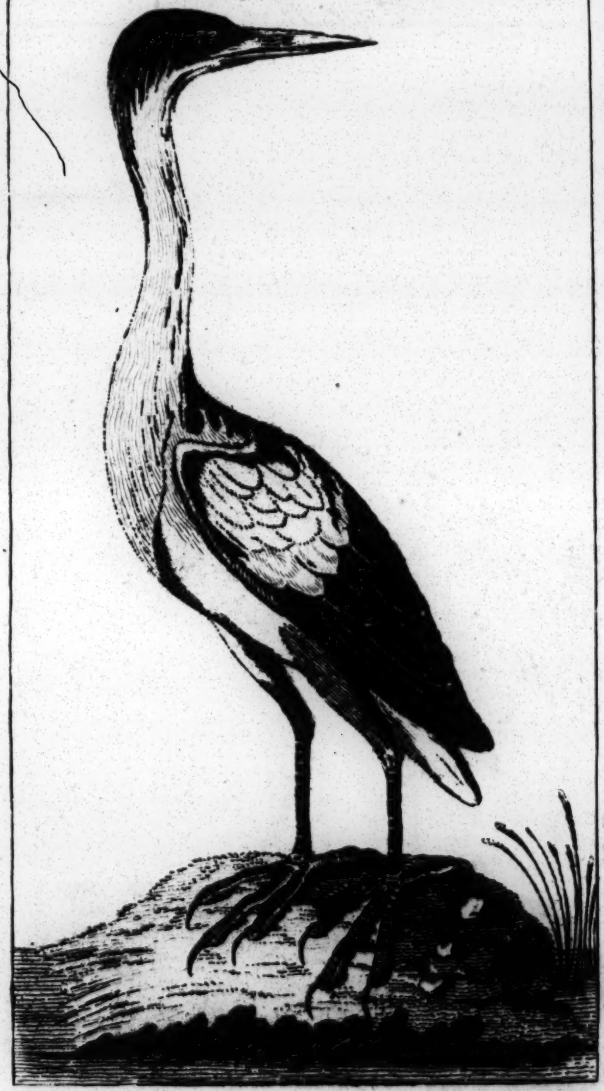
THE BITTERN.

THE bittern is leſs than the heron, and has a weaker bill, which is not above four inches in length: but it principally differs from the heron in its colour, which is uſually of a paliſh yellow, ſpotted and barred with black.

White Heron



Little Bittern



Egret

black. It has two kinds of notes; the one croaking, when it is disturbed; the other bellowing, which it commences in the spring, and ends in autumn. The latter is indeed like the roaring of a bull, but hollower and louder, and is heard at the distance of a mile. From the loudness and solemnity of this note, many have imagined that the bird made use of external instruments to produce it, and that so small a body could never eject such a quantity of sound. The fact however is, that its windpipe is fitted to produce the voice for which it is remarkable; the lower part of it dividing into the lungs, is supplied with a thin loose membrane, which can be filled with a large body of air, and exploded at pleasure. It is certain that the bittern is frequently heard, where there are neither reeds, waters, nor other vehicle to assist its sonorous invitations.

This is a very retired bird, concealing itself in the midst of reeds and rushes in marshy places. Though it is of the heron kind, it is neither so destructive nor so voracious; and though it so nearly resembles the heron in figure, it differs from it greatly in its manners and its appetites. The food of the bittern is chiefly frogs: it builds its nest with the leaves of water plants, and lays six or seven eggs of an ash green colour. The heron feeds its young for several days; the bittern conducts its little ones to their food in about three days. The flesh of the bittern has much the same flavour as that of the hare, and is free from the fishiness of that of the heron; it is there-

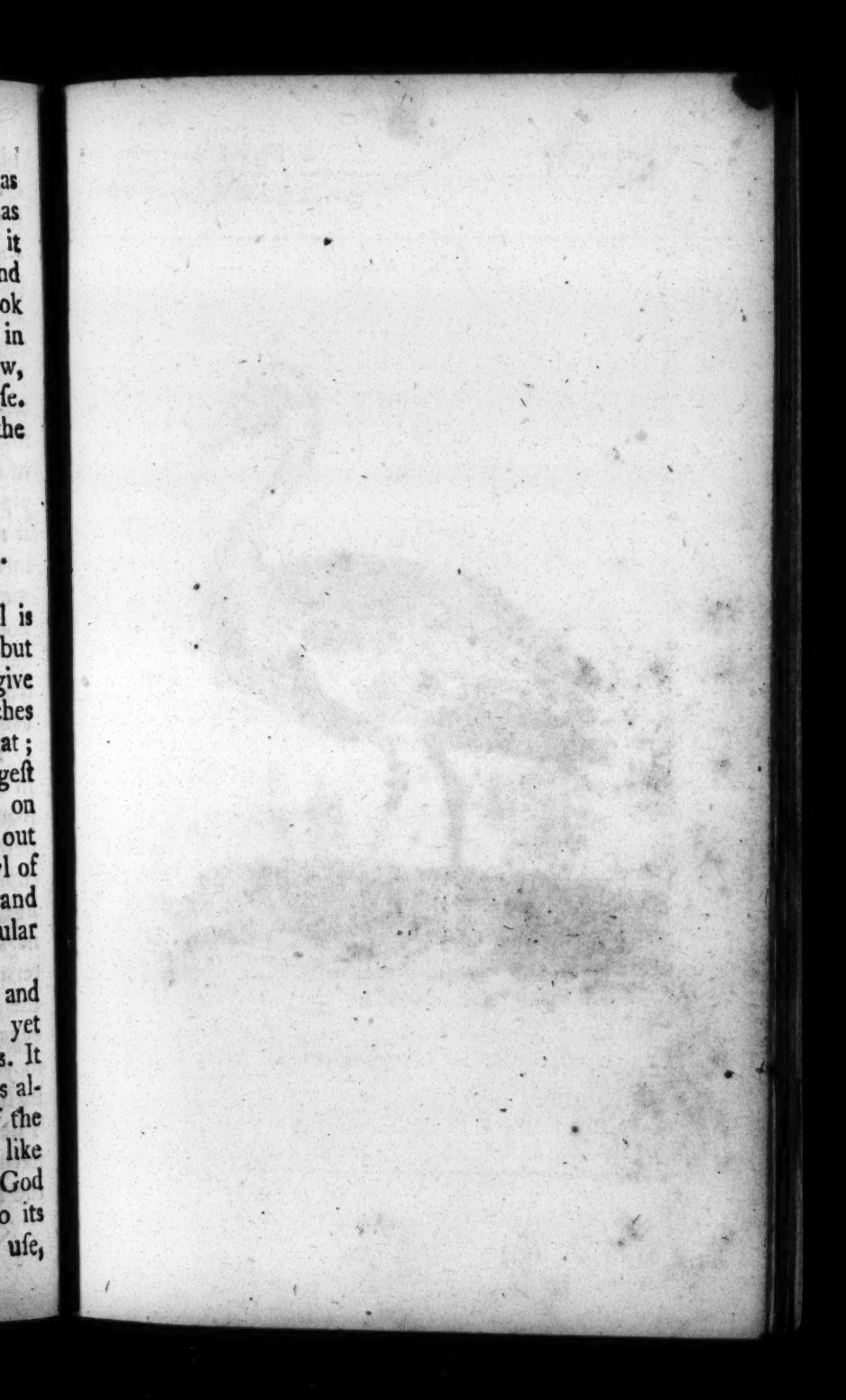
fore eagerly ſought after by the fowler, and as it is with difficulty provoked to flight, and has a dull and flagging pace when on the wing, it does not often eſcape him. Towards the end of autumn, however, it ſeems to have ſhook off its wonted indolence, and is ſeen riſing in a ſpiral aſcent till it is quite loſt from the view, making at the ſame time a very ſingular noiſe.

This bird is called the mire-drum in the north of England.

THE SPOON-BILL, OR SHOVELLER.

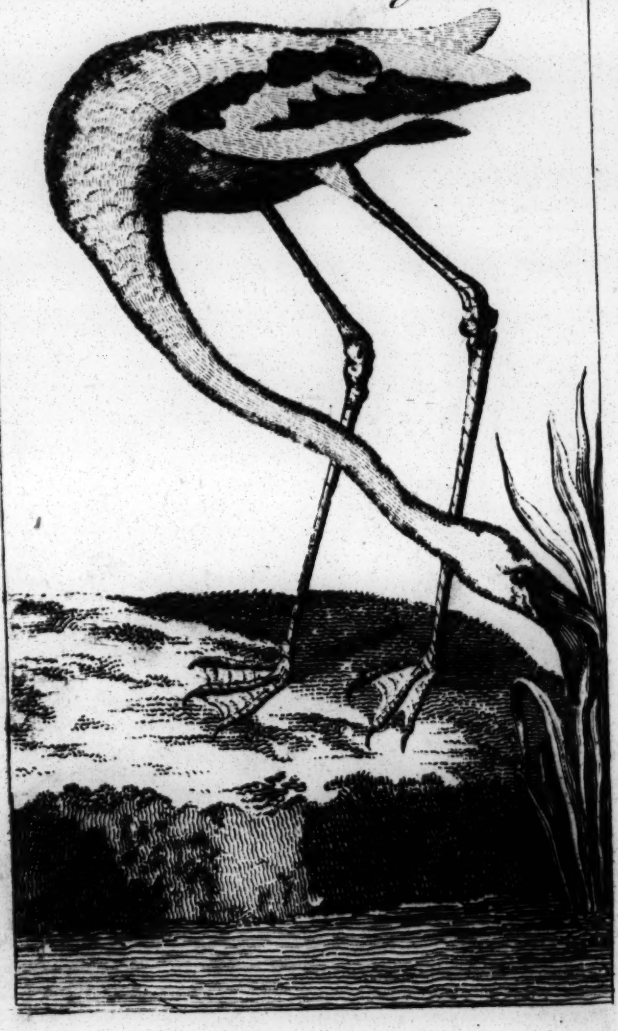
WHEN it ſtands erect, the ſpoon-bill is about a yard in height; the body is ſmall, but it is the length of the legs and neck which give it this ſtature. The beak is about eight inches in length. It is all the way broad and flat; but as the beaks of all other birds are largeſt at the head, and ſmalleſt at the point, this, on the contrary, is largeſt there; it ſwells out into a broad and rounded end, like the bowl of a ſpoon, except that it is not hollow; and whether ſhut or open, it makes a very ſingular appearance.

The bird is all over as white as ſnow, and though it has no ſort of variety about it, yet appears wonderfully pretty by its cleanlineſs. It is frequent in many parts of Europe, and is always ſeen about waters. The ſtructure of the bill appears ſtrange at firſt ſight; but, like all other things in the contrivance of the God of Nature, when we come to inquire into its uſe,



Spoonbill

Flamingo



uſe, it is eaſy to know why it had this form. The food of this creature is principally the frog, a nimble and cunning animal, which will evade the ſtroke of a ſharp beak darted down at it, or will ſlip away ſometimes from the heron, even when ſeized; the ſpoon-bill, therefore, opening its beak wide, places it near the ground where theſe reptiles are frequent, and when any come in its way, cloſes the beak upon them: the beak is not only broad to hold them in a large graſp at once, but it is notched and toothed all the way round; ſo that to eſcape is impracticable. With this the bird cruſhes the frog till it is half dead, and then ſwallows it.

A bird ſo oddly faſhioned as the ſpoon-bill might be expected to poſſeſs ſome very peculiar appetites; but it ſeems to lead a life entirely reſembling all thoſe of the crane kind. In Europe it breeds in high trees, in company with the heron, and in a neſt formed of the ſame materials: it lays four or five eggs, which are white, powdered with a few pale ſpots.

The ſpoon-bill of America is of a beautiful roſe colour or crimſon.

THE FLAMINGO.

THIS extraordinary bird is frequent in the warmer climates, and moſt commonly found about the ſhallow ſhores of the ſea and the mouths of rivers. When it is ſeen in the water, which is generally the caſe, the body only is on the ſurface, and it appears ſwimming, tho'

really ſtanding: the head alſo is almoſt conſtantly under water in ſearch of food; at theſe times all that is ſeen, is the body of the bird, as large as the wild gooſe, or a little more; but with what aſtoniſhment does the ſtranger ſee it come out of the water! The head is firſt raiſed erect, and the ſurpriſing length of the neck is like that of the oſtrich, only more extraordinary: the body, as it comes on ſhore, is raiſed as much above the ground as the head above the body, and there ſtalks forth a bird of a wonderful height, and in beauty ſurpaſſing almoſt every other. The wings nearly cover the body, and the tail is nothing: what part of the body remains uncovered is ſnow-white; the colour of the wings is of a ſcarlet, ſo bright, that the eye is dazzled to look long upon it; and the long feathers are of the deepeſt black: the neck is of the ſame ſnow-white with the body, and the legs are of the ſame ſcarlet with the wings: the beak is blue, except at the tip, where it is black. It is not long, ſtraight, and ſharp, as in the heron kind, but vaſtly ſtrong, and of a ſhape ſo ſingular, that it appears broken. The legs and thighs, which are not much thicker than a man's finger, are about two feet eight inches high, and its neck near three feet long. The toes of the bird are connected together by a membrane like thoſe of the duck-kind, ſo that it *can* ſwim; but the legs are long, and it never makes this uſe of them in the common courſe of its feeding: the only purpoſe to which theſe webs ſerve is the preſervation of its life on ſingular occaſions:

the

the tides are ſudden in ſome parts of America, where the bird is common; and while it is rooting under ſome rough ſtone for a ſhell-fiſh, it becomes out of its depth: in this caſe, the leaſt guſt of wind might blow it to ſea, and it muſt periſh, for it does not very eaſily riſe from the water, when out of its depth. The webbed feet are now uſeful; it ſwims till it can reach the bottom, and as ſoon as a ſmall part of its legs are out of the water, it takes wing.

"The fleſh of an old flamingo," ſays Dampier, "is black and hard, though well taſted, but that of a young one is much better. But, of all other delicacies, the flamingo's tongue is the moſt celebrated: a diſh of theſe tongues," continues he, "is a feaſt for an emperor."

Theſe birds always go in flocks, and are ſometimes ſeen, at the dawn of day, flying down in great numbers from the mountains, and conducting each other with a trumpet cry, ſounding like the word *tococo*, from whence the ſavages of Canada have given them the name. Their time of breeding is regulated by the climate in which they reſide: in North America they breed in our ſummer; on the other ſide of the Line they take the moſt favourable ſeaſon of the year. They build in extenſive unfrequented marſhes; and their neſts are not leſs curious than the animals which build them: they are raiſed about a foot and an half from the ſurface of the pool, and are formed of mud ſcraped up together, and hardened by the ſun, or the heat of the bird's body: they reſemble

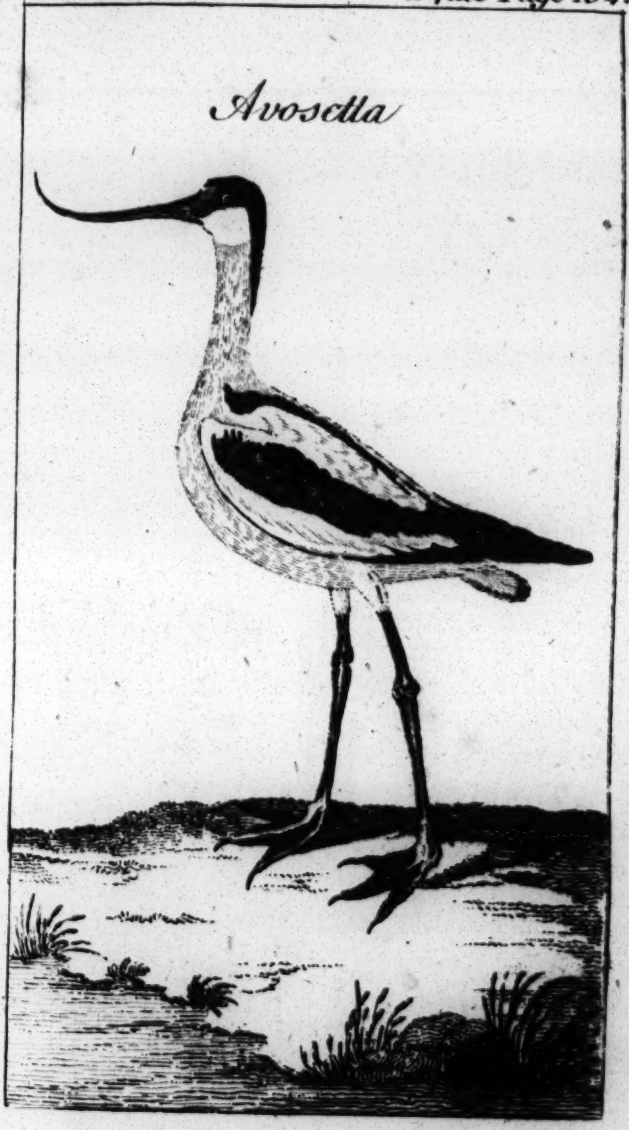
one

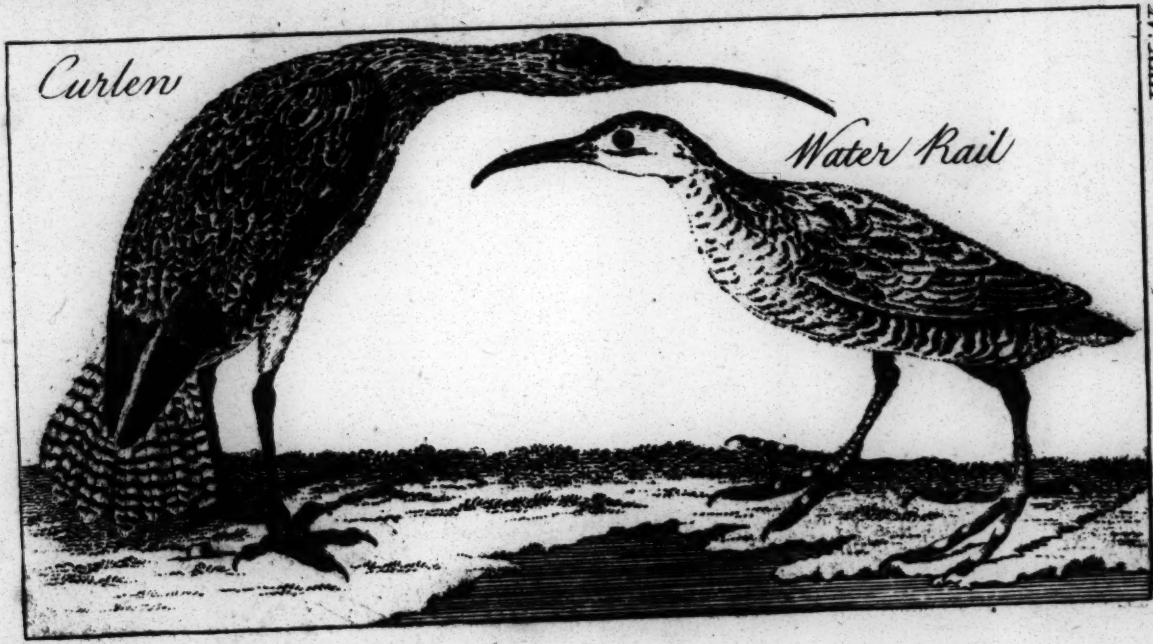
one of thoſe pots which we ſee placed on chimneys, are hollowed out in the ſhape of a bird, and have no lining but the well-cemented mud that forms the ſides of the building. The female lays only two eggs; and as her legs are immoderately long, ſhe ſtraddles on the neſt, while her legs hang down, one on each ſide, into the water.

THE AVOSETTA, OR SCOOPER.

THE avoſetta may be diſtinguiſhed from all other birds by the ſingular form of its bill, which turns up like a hook in an oppoſite direction to that of the hawk or parrot: this extraordinary bill is about three inches and an half long, ſlender, compreſſed very thin, flexible, and of a ſubſtance like whalebone. The tongue is ſhort; the head is black, as well as half the hind part of the neck; all the under ſide of the body is of a pure white; the back, the coverts on the ridge of the wings, and ſome of the leſſer quill feathers, are of the ſame colour; the other coverts, and the exterior ſides and ends of the greater quill feathers, are black: the tail conſiſts of twelve white feathers; the legs, which are very long, are of a fine blue colour, and naked higher than the knees; the webs are duſky, and deeply indented.

It feeds on worms and inſects, which it ſcoops out of the ſand with its bill. It lays two eggs about the ſize of thoſe of the pigeon,


Avosetta



N°. XXIII.

to face Page 165.

which are white, tinged with green and ſpotted with black. Theſe birds are often ſeen in winter on the eaſtern ſhores of this kingdom, in Glouceſterſhire, at the Severn's mouth, and ſometimes on the lakes of Shropſhire: it has a chirping, pert note, and frequently wades in the waters.

THE CURLEW.

THE weight of the curlew is about twenty-ſeven ounces; the length, from the top of the bill to the end of the claws, twenty-nine inches; and the breadth, when the wings are extended, three feet four inches. The bill of this bird, which is near ſix inches long, is narrow, a little crooked, and of a dark-brown colour. The legs are long, bare, and of a duſky blue, having a thick membrane which reaches to the firſt joint. This bird is of a greyiſh colour, and its fleſh is very rank and fiſhy. In the winter time theſe birds frequent our ſea-coaſts in large flocks, walking on the open ſands; feeding on crabs and other marine inſects. In the ſummer they retire to the mountainous part of the country, where they pair and breed. Their legs are of a pale olive colour, marked with irregular brown ſpots.

THE WOODCOCK.

THE woodcock is ſmaller than the partridge, and uſually weighs about twelve ounces: it

it is fourteen inches in length, and twenty-ſix in breadth. The bill is ſtraight, and three inches long; the upper part falling a little over the under at the tip: it is duſky towards the end, and reddiſh at the baſe: a black line extends from the bill to the eyes, and the forehead is of a reddiſh aſh-colour. The head, neck, back, and coverts of the wings, are irregularly barred with a kind of a red, black, grey, and aſh colour; but on the head the black predominates: the quill-feathers are duſky, indented with red marks: the lower part of the body is of a dirty white, with numerous tranſverſe lines of a duſky colour. The tail, which conſiſts of twelve feathers, is duſky on one web, and has a red mark on the other: the tips are aſh-coloured above, and white below. Their legs and feet are of a duſky pale colour, and the claws are divided to their origin. Their eggs are long, and of a pale red, with ſpots and clouds of a deeper colour.

During ſummer theſe birds are inhabitants of the alps of Norway, Sweden, and the northern parts of Europe: they leave England about the latter end of February, or the beginning of March; though they have been ſometimes known to continue here. In the winter great numbers of them are ſeen as far ſouth as Smyrna and Aleppo; and in the ſame ſeaſon in Barbary. It has been ſaid that ſome of them have appeared as far ſouth as Egypt. The fleſh of the woodcock is eſteemed a great delicacy.

THE

The GODWIT.

THIS bird is not much unlike the woodcock, though it is larger; it is ſixteen inches in length, and twenty-ſeven in breadth: the bill is four inches long, black at the end, and of a pale purple at the baſe; the feathers of the head, neck, and back, are of a light reddiſh brown, marked in the middle with a duſky ſpot. The rump is remarkable for having a white ring. Theſe birds are taken in the fens, and when fattened are eſteemed a great delicacy. In September they appear on our coaſts in ſmall flocks, and remain with us the whole winter. Like the curlew, they walk on the open ſands, and feed on inſects.

The SNIPE.

THE ſnipe weighs about four ounces; and is in length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, about twelve inches; in breadth it is fourteen inches. The bill is three inches long, ſtraight, and of a duſky-colour. The head is divided lengthways with four black and three red lines: the chin is white, and the neck is varied with brown and red: the ſcapulars are beautifully ſtriped with black and yellow. The quill-feathers are duſky, but the edge of the firſt, and the tips of the ſecondary feathers are white: the breaſt and belly are white: the tail is duſky, marked with ruſt colour,

lour, and tipt with white; the legs are of a paliſh green, and the claws are black.

The young of theſe birds are ſo often found in England, that it is doubtful whether they entirely leave this iſland; it is, however, certain that ſome of them continue with us all the ſummer, making their neſts as well on the higheſt mountains, as in our low moors and marſhes, and laying four or five eggs of a dirty olive colour, marked with duſky ſpots. Their food is like that of the woodcock, and their fleſh is much eſteemed, as being tender, ſweet and delicate.

THE WATER-HEN AND THE COOT.

THERE are two or three birds which ſeem to form the ſhade between water-fowls properly ſo called, and thoſe of the crane kind. They, in ſome degree, partake of the form of the crane; and, though furniſhed with long legs and necks, rather ſwim than wade. They cannot, with propriety, be called web-footed, though they are not entirely diveſted of membranes, with which their toes are fringed on each ſide, and which enable them to ſwim.

The water-hen and the coot fall under this claſs, and they have too near an affinity, not to be ranked in the ſame deſcription. They reſemble each other in ſhape, they both have long legs, and thighs which are partly naked: their wings are ſhort, their bills are ſhort and weak, their foreheads are bald and deſtitute of

Water hen
Coot

feathers, their colour is black, and their habits are the ſame. In ſize they are different; the water-hen weighing about fifteen ounces, and the coot twenty-four. In the coot, the bald part of the forehead is black; in the water-hen it is of a beautiful pink colour; the toes of the coot are edged with a ſcolloped membrane; thoſe of the water-hen are ſtraight and narrower.

In their manner of living there is leſs difference than in their figures; the hiſtory of one will therefore ſerve for both. Birds of the crane kind are furniſhed with long wings, and can eaſily change place; the water-hen, whoſe wings are ſhort, never deſerts the pond or river in which it ſeeks for proviſion, and the graſſy banks which form the margin of thoſe waters. Whether its food conſiſts of pond-weed or water inſects, is not abſolutely certain; but pond-weed has been found in their ſtomachs. She makes her neſt upon low trees and ſhrubs by the water-ſide, and it conſiſts of ſticks and fibres. The female lays twice or thrice in a ſummer; her eggs are white with a tincture of green, and ſpotted with red. As ſoon as the young are excluded the egg, they ſwim in company with the parent, and imitate all her manners; but when they are able to provide for themſelves, ſhe drives them off to ſeek their fortune.

The coot, being a larger bird, is generally ſeen in larger ſtreams, and more remote from mankind. The water-hen prefers inhabited ſituations, delighting in ponds, moats, and pools

of water near gentlemen's houſes; but the coot continues in rivers, and among ruſhy margined lakes; where it makes a neſt of the weeds which are ſupplied by the ſtream, laying them among the reeds, floating on the ſurface, and riſing and falling with the water. It is ſupported by the reeds among which it is built, ſo that it is ſeldom waſhed into the middle of the ſtream: but, when this accident happens, which is ſometimes the caſe, the bird ſits in her neſt, like a mariner in his boat, and, with her legs, ſteers her cargo into the neareſt harbour.

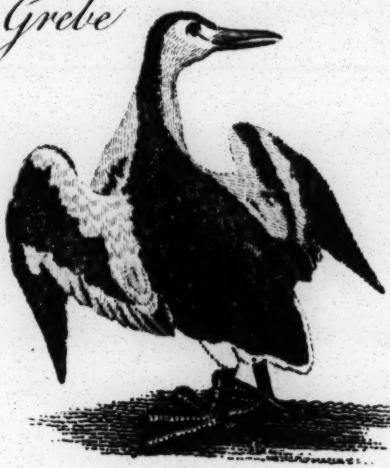
To theſe birds, with long legs and finny toes, may be added one ſpecies more, with ſhort legs and finny toes: the bird we mean is

THE GREBE.

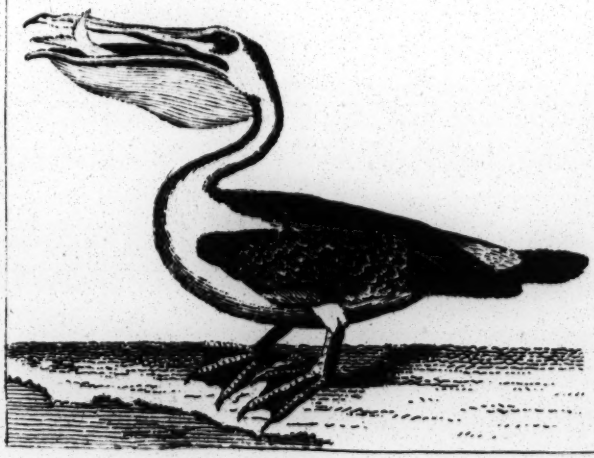
IT is much larger than either of the former, and its plumage is black and white: its legs are calculated entirely for ſwimming, and not for walking; from the knee upwards they are indeed hid in the belly of the bird, and conſequently have very little motion. It is on this account that they ſeldom leave the water, and uſually frequent thoſe ſhallow pools where their faculty of ſwimming can be turned to the greateſt advantage, in fiſhing and purſuing their prey. They chiefly frequent the meers of Shropſhire and Cheſhire, where they breed in a floating-neſt among reeds and flags, which are kept ſteady by the reeds of the margin. The grebe preys upon fiſh, and is almoſt perpetu-

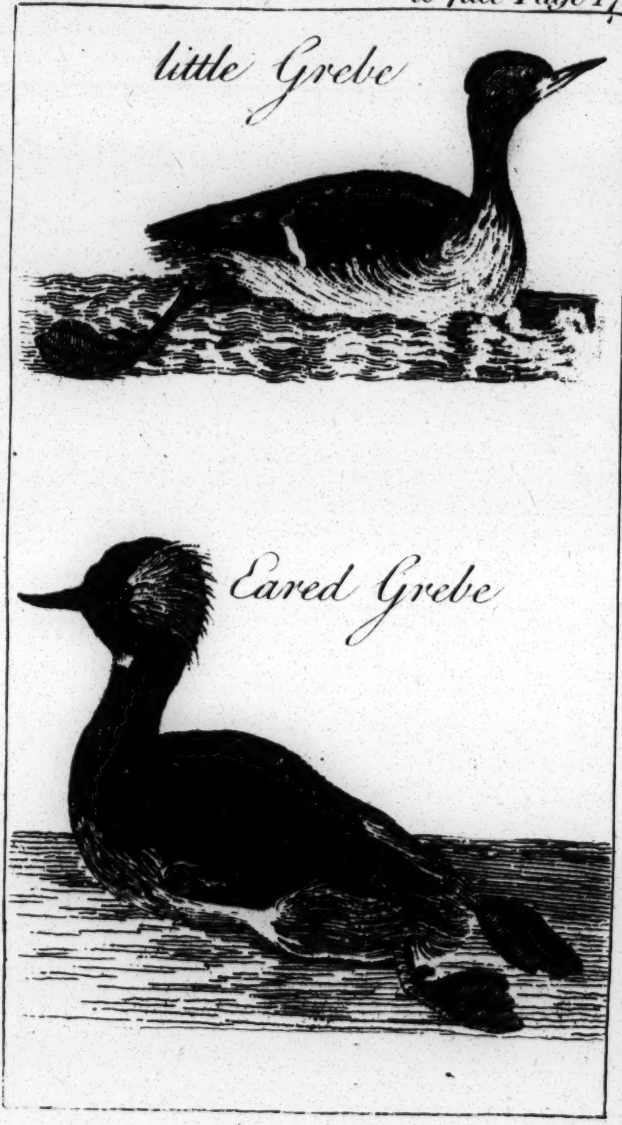
ally

Grebe



Pelican




little Grebe
Eared Grebe

ally diving. Even in ſwimming, it ſhews little more than the head above water, and is extremely difficult to be ſhot, as it darts down on the leaſt appearance of danger. It never appears on land, and, though frequently diſturbed, will never deſert that lake where, by diving and ſwimming, it can find both food and ſecurity.

Theſe birds are principally valued for the ſkin of their breaſt, the plumage of which is of a moſt beautiful white, and as gloſſy as ſattin. This part is made into tippets; but the ſkins loſe their ſhining colour about February; and their breaſts are entirely bare in breeding-time.

THE LESSER CRESTED GREBE.

THIS ſpecies is ſmaller than a teal: the head and neck are black; the throat ſpotted with white; the whole upper-ſide of a blackiſh brown, except the ridge of the wing above the firſt joint, and the tips of the middle quill-feathers, which are white; the breaſt, belly, and inner-coverts of the wings are white. A tuft of long looſe feathers hang backwards on each ſide behind the eyes. The irides are red, and the legs of a dirty green. A bare ſtripe of red extends from the bill to the eyes.

THE LITTLE GREBE.

THE length of this bird is ten inches, the breadth ſixteen inches, and the weight about

ſix or ſeven ounces. The head is thick ſet with feathers, which on the cheeks of old birds are of a bright bay. The top of the head, the neck, breaſt, and the whole upper ſide of the body are of a deep brown, tinged with red; the great quill-feathers are duſky; the belly is aſh-coloured, mixed with a ſilvery white; and the legs are of a dirty green.

Of WATER-FOWL.

The PELICAN.

THE formation of this bird is in almoſt all reſpects like that of a ſwan; the body is as large, the neck is nearly as long; the legs are as ſhort as in that bird, and the feet are black, very broad, and webbed in the ſame manner. This bird is alſo throughout of a whitiſh colour, though not of the pure white of the ſwan, except that the tips of ſome of the feathers near the beak and wings are black. The bird is ſo bulky and unwieldy, that it is fit only for the waters, though its feet being not placed ſo backward as in the ſwan and ſome others, it walks better. Its note is very loud and ſtrange for a bird, reſembling rather the lamentation of a man grievouſly complaining. [See Pſalm cii. 6.]

The beak of the pelican is very large and long; it is above a foot in length, and of the thick-

thickneſs of a child's arm at the bottom: the colour is bluiſh and yellowiſh, and the point is very ſharp. The upper chap of it is formed as in all other birds; but the lower is unlike every thing in nature; it is not compoſed of one ſolid piece, as in all other birds, but is made of two long and flat ribs, with a tough membrane connected to one and to the other: this is alſo extended to the throat, and is not tight, but very broad and looſe, ſo that it can contain a vaſt quantity of any kind of proviſion.

This bird frequents the waters both freſh and ſalt, and feeds voraciouſly on fiſhes and water inſects; but its favourite reſidence is in remote uncultivated foreſts and wilderneſſes, where it can remain quite undiſturbed. Its wings are long, and it eaſily flies backward and forward. In theſe places it builds, and there it breeds up its young. Now, as the pelican is to carry food for a numerous brood, as ravenous as herſelf, to theſe remote places, this vaſt bag which nature hath given her at the throat, is the contrivance for the carrying of it: in this bag ſhe ſtores what ſhe has caught, and flying away to the diſtant place of her reſidence, this anxious and laborious parent feeds her young from that repoſitory. If ſome perſon in early time, quite unacquainted with the hiſtory of the bird, ſaw her alight in the midſt of a deſert, among a brood of ravenous young ones, and feed them from this bag, it would not be unnatural for him to ſuppoſe, however ſtrange the thing muſt be in itſelf, that it was

with her own blood ſhe fed them. Thus aroſe, from a miſtake, the ſtory of this wonder, which faithful ignorance has propagated through ſo many ages, and which moraliſts and poets have from the earlieſt times drawn into an emblem of paternal affection.

In the year 1745, there was a pelican ſhewn in London, brought by Captain Pelly from the Cape of Good Hope, where they are larger than any where elſe; and of which I find the following account in Edwards's Hiſtory of Birds: "From the point of the bill to the angle of the mouth is twenty inches of our Engliſh meaſure, which is ſix inches more than any natural hiſtorian has found it: the academy of Paris having meaſured one which was about fourteen inches, Paris meaſure I ſuppoſe; and our countryman Willoughby meaſured one, brought from Ruſſia, which he makes fourteen inches Engliſh. I thought it ſomething incredible in Willoughby's deſcription, that a man ſhould put his head into the pouch under the bill, till I ſaw it performed in this bird by its keeper, and am ſure a ſecond man's head might have been put in with it at the ſame time." He alſo obſerves, that the ſkin round the eye is bare of feathers, and the pouch, when dry, appears of the conſiſtence and colour of a blown dry ox's bladder, having fibres running its whole length, and blood-veſſels croſſing them, and proceeding from the ſides of the lower part of the bill, which opens into this pouch its whole length. It is thought to be a very long-lived bird; ſome writers

writers ſay it lives to ſixty or ſeventy years. It ſeems to inhabit the greateſt part of the old world, it being found in many climates both north and ſouth, as well as the intermediate latitudes; it is pretty common in Ruſſia, and abounds in Egypt.

The fleſh of this bird ſmells very rancid, and taſtes worſe than it ſmells. The native Americans kill vaſt numbers; not to eat, for they are not even fit for the banquet of a ſavage, but to convert their large bags into purſes and tobacco pouches. They alſo dreſs the ſkin with ſalt and aſhes, rubbing it well with oil, and then forming it to their purpoſe: it thus becomes ſo ſoft and pliant, that the Spaniſh women ſometimes adorn it with gold, and convert it into work-bags.

THE ALBATROSS.

THE body of this creature is larger than that of the pelican, and its wings, when extended, meaſure ten feet from tip to tip. The bill, which is yellowiſh, is ſix inches long, and terminates in a crooked point: the top of the head is of a lightiſh brown; the back is of a dark brown, ſpotted with black; and the belly is white. The toes are webbed, and of a fleſh colour.

This bird inhabits the tropical climates, and is alſo ſeen as far as the ſtreights of Magellan in the South Sea. It is one of the moſt formidable of the aquatic tribe; not only living upon fiſh,

fiſh, but alſo upon water-fowl. Like all the gull-kind, it preys upon the wing; and chiefly purſues the flying-fiſh that are forced from the ocean by the dolphins.

If we may credit Wiquefort, theſe birds are often ſeen ſleeping in the air, entirely remote from land, with their head under one wing, and the other employed in beating the air; it is certain that few birds float upon the air with more eaſe than the albatroſs, or ſupport themſelves a longer time in that element.

The albatroſs has a peculiar affection for the penguin, and a pleaſure in its ſociety. Captain Hunt, who for ſome time commanded at our ſettlement upon Falkland iſlands, ſays he was often amazed at the union preſerved between theſe two birds, and the regularity with which they built together. In that deſolate ſpot, where the birds never dreaded the encroachments of men, they were ſeen to build with an amazing degree of uniformity; their neſts covering fields by thouſands, and reſembling a regular plantation: but ſince they have been diſturbed by men, the ſociety is broken up, and the neſts are totally deſtroyed.

THE CORMORANT.

THE cormorant may be diſtinguiſhed from all other birds of this kind, by its four toes being united together by membranes; and the middle toe being notched like a ſaw, to aſſiſt it in holding its fiſhy prey. This ſpecies weighs about

about four pounds: it is thirty-two inches in length, and almoſt four feet in breadth. The bill, which is three inches and an half long, is duſky and deſtitute of noſtrils: the baſe of the lower chap is covered with a naked yellowiſh ſkin, that extends under the chin, forming a kind of pouch. The head and neck of this bird are of a ſooty blackneſs, and the body thick and heavy; more reſembling the figure of a gooſe than that of a gull.

Theſe birds occupy the higheſt parts of the cliffs impending over the ſea; their neſts are compoſed of ſticks, ſea-tang, graſs, &c. in which they lay ſix or ſeven eggs, which are white, and of an oblong form. At the approach of winter, they are ſeen diſperſed along the ſea-ſhore, and aſcending up the mouths of freſh-water rivers, carrying deſtruction to all the finny tribe. They are remarkably voraracious, having almoſt ſudden digeſtion: their appetite is for ever craving, and never ſatisfied; and this hunger is promoted by the vaſt quantity of ſmall worms that fill their inteſtines.

With the groſſeſt appetites, this bird has the rankeſt and moſt diſagreeable ſmell of any bird, even when alive. Its form is diſagreeable; its voice hoarſe and croaking, and its qualities obſcene. Milton, with great propriety, has made Satan perſonate this bird, to ſurvey undelighted the beauties of Paradiſe, and ſit on the tree of life deviſing death.

This bird ſeems to be of a multiform nature, and, wherever fiſh are to be found, watches

watches their migrations: it purſues its prey in freſh-water lakes, as well as in the depths of the ocean; and preys by night as well as in the day-time. It is ſeldom ſeen in the air, except where there are fiſh below, and they muſt be near the ſurface before it will venture to ſouſe upon them. It ſeldom makes an unſucceſsful dip, and often riſes with a larger fiſh than it can readily devour.

THE GANNET, or, SOLAND GOOSE.

THE gannet weighs about four pounds and a quarter: it is three feet one inch in length, and ſix feet two inches in breadth. It is indeed about the ſize of a tame gooſe, but its wings are longer. The bill is ſix inches long, ſtraight almoſt to the point, where it inclines down, and the ſides are irregularly jagged, that it may hold its prey with greater ſecurity. It differs from the cormorant in ſize, being larger; in its colour, which is chiefly white; and having no noſtrils, but in their ſtead a long furrow, extending almoſt to the end of the bill. The eyes, which are full of vivacity, are ſurrounded with a naked ſkin of a fine blue. A narrow ſlip of black bare ſkin, extends from the corner of the mouth to the hind part of the head; beneath the chin is another, that can be dilated like the pouch of the pelican, and is capable of containing five or ſix herrings. The neck is very long, the body flat, and very full of feathers.

As

As theſe birds ſubſiſt entirely upon fiſh, they frequent thoſe uninhabited iſlands where their food is found in plenty, and where they are undiſturbed by mankind. The iſle of Ailſa in the fyrth of Clyde; the rocks adjacent to St. Kilda, a ſmall iſle near the Orkneys; the Skelig iſlands off the coaſts of Kerry, in Ireland; and the Baſs iſle, in the fyrth of Edinburgh. In the laſt mentioned iſland, Dr. Harvey affirms that the ſurface is almoſt wholly covered, during the months of May and June, with neſts, eggs, and young birds; ſo that it is ſcarcely poſſible to walk without treading on them. The rocks of St. Kilda ſeem to be as much reſorted to by theſe birds, and the inhabitants of that ſmall iſland are principally ſupported by them and their eggs throughout the year.

The gannet is a bird of paſſage: its firſt appearance in thoſe iſlands is in March; and it quits them in Auguſt or September, according as the inhabitants take or leave the firſt eggs. Its motions may probably be determined by the migrations of the immenſe ſhoals of herrings that come pouring down at that ſeaſon through the Britiſh channel, and ſupply all Europe, as well as this bird, with their ſpoil. The gannet aſſiduouſly attends the ſhoal in their paſſage, accompanies them in their whole circuit round our iſland, and ſhares with our fiſhermen this exhauſtleſs banquet. Whenever the gannet is ſeen, it is ſure to announce to the fiſhermen the arrival of the finny tribe.

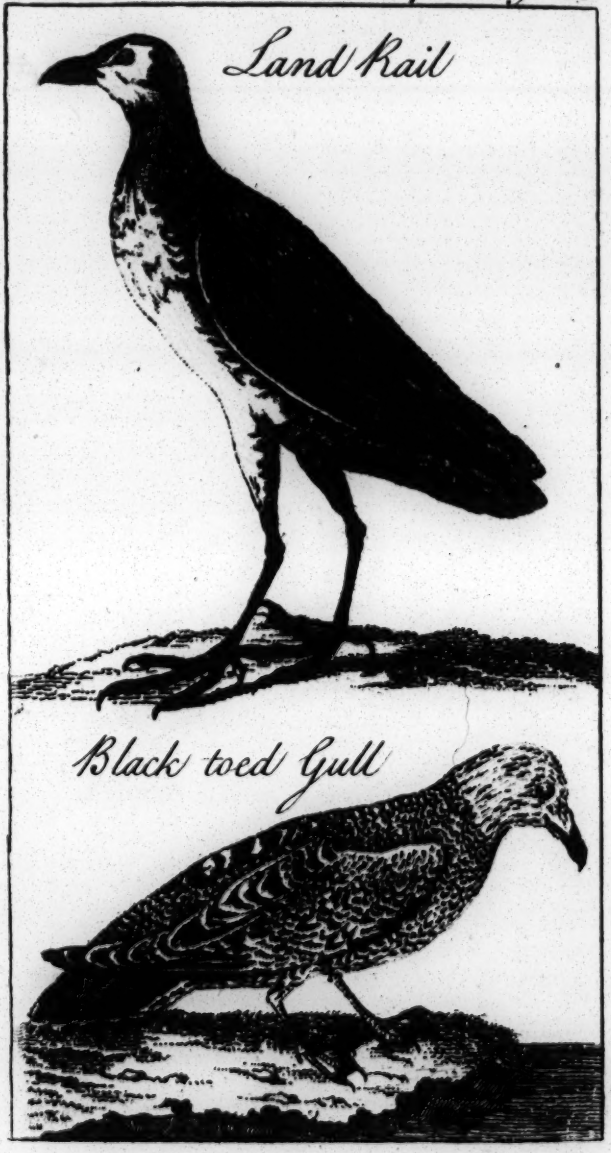
Theſe birds are well known on moſt of our coaſts,

coaſts, but not by the name of the Solano gooſe. They are called gannets in Cornwall and Ireland, and even in Wales. Gannets are ſometimes taken at ſea by the following deception: the fiſhermen faſten a pilchard to a board, and leave it floating, which alluring bait decoys the unwary gannet to its own deſtruction.

THE GULL AND PETREL.

THE larger gulls live at the moſt remote diſtance from man; the ſmaller reſide wherever they can take their prey; and viſit the moſt populous places when ſolitude can no longer grant them a ſupply. In this claſs the gull properly ſo called may be placed, of which there are upwards of twenty different kinds; the petrel, of which there are three; and the ſea-ſwallow, of which there are about the ſame number. Gulls are to be diſtinguiſhed by an angular knob on the lower chap; petrels, by being deſtitute of this knob; and ſea-ſwallows by their bills, which are ſharp-pointed, ſtraight, and ſlender. In their appetites and places of abode they all perfectly agree.

The gull, and all its varieties, is ſeen with a ſlow-ſailing flight hovering over rivers to prey upon the ſmaller kinds of fiſh; it follows the ploughman in fallow-fields to pick up inſects; and, when living animal food is not to be obtained, it has no objection to carrion, or any thing of the kind that offers. But it is chiefly


Land Rail
Black toed Gull

Winter Mew
Black toed Gull

Gulls

chiefly round our boldeſt rockieſt ſhores that they are ſeen in the greateſt abundance. It is on ſuch ſhores that the rocks offer them a retreat for their young, and the ſea is a ſufficient ſupply. In the cavities of theſe rocks, of which the ſhore is compoſed, infinite variety of ſea-fowls retire to breed in ſafety. The waves beneath, beating continually at the baſe, often wear the ſhore into an impending boldneſs; ſo that it appears to jut over the water; while the raging of the ſea makes the place inacceſſible from below.

Like all birds of the rapacious kind, the gull lays but few eggs; ſometimes one, ſometimes two, but never more than three; it builds on the ledges of a rock, and its neſt conſiſts of long graſs and ſea-weeds. Moſt of the kind have a fiſhy taſte, with black ſtringy fleſh; but the young are better food; and of theſe the poor inhabitants of our northern iſlands make their wretched banquets. They are almoſt ſtrangers to any other food, and even ſalted gull may be reliſhed by thoſe who know no better.

OF BIRDS OF THE PENGUIN KIND.

THE MAGELLANIC PENGUIN.

THE Magellanic penguin is the largeſt and moſt remarkable of the kind; it is not much

inferior in ſize to the tame gooſe. It cannot fly, its wings being very ſhort, covered with ſtiff hard feathers, always expanded and hanging uſeleſsly down at the ſides of the bird. The upper part of the head, the back, and the rump, are covered with ſtiff black feathers; but the belly and back are of a ſnowy whiteneſs, except a line of black which croſſes the crop: that half of the bill which is towards the baſe is black and covered with wrinkles, but is marked croſſwiſe with a ſtripe of yellow.

Theſe birds walk erect with their heads on high, their fin-like wings hanging down like arms. Fiſh is their only food, and they ſeldom come aſhore but in the breeding ſeaſon: they dive with great rapidity, and are extremely voracious. In conſequence of this gluttonous appetite their fleſh is rank and fiſhy, though our ſailors admit it to be tolerably good eating.

They are birds of ſociety, and, when they come on ſhore, are ſeen drawn up in rank and file upon the ledge of a rock, ſtanding together with the albatroſs, as if in conſultation. This is previous to their laying, which in that part of the world uſually begins in the month of November; a ſmall depreſſion in the earth, without any materials, conſtitutes their neſt. The progreſs of incubation is carried on very rapidly by the heat of their bodies, and the warmth of their feathers.

The manner of this bird's neſtling is different in other countries: in ſome places, inſtead

ſtead of being ſatisfied with a ſuperficial depreſſion in the ground, it burrows two or three yards deep; in others it forſakes the level to clamber up the ledge of the rock, where it lays its ſingle egg and hatches. Sometimes three or four take poſſeſſion of one hole, and hatch their young together, in the holes of the rocks, where nature has made them a retreat. The eggs of this penguin is very large for the ſize of the bird, and generally exceeds thoſe of a gooſe in magnitude. But as there are many varieties of the penguin, and as they differ in ſize, from that of a Muſcovy duck to a ſwan, the ſizes of their eggs are proportionally different.

THE AUK, THE PUFFIN, AND OTHER BIRDS OF THE PENGUIN KIND.

THERE is a numerous tribe of birds of nearly the ſame form, manners, and appetites as the penguin, though far inferior in ſize. They live upon the water, in which they are continually ſeen diving; and ſeldom venture upon land, except for the purpoſe of breeding.

The Great Northern Diver is the firſt of this ſmaller tribe, and is nearly of the ſize of a gooſe. It differs from the penguin, in being much ſlenderer and more elegantly formed, and is all over beautifully variegated with ſtripes.

The Grey Speckled Diver is not larger than the Muſcovy duck, and reſembles the great northern diver in every particular, except ſize.

The Auk, which breeds on the iſland of St. Kilda, chiefly differs from the penguin in ſize and colour. It is not ſo large as a duck; and the whole of the breaſt and belly is white.

The Guillemot is nearly of the ſame ſize as the auk, but has a longer, a ſlenderer, and a ſtraighter bill.

The bill of the Puffin is different from that of any other bird: it is flat, with its edge upwards, of a triangular figure, and ending in a ſharp point: the upper part is bent a little downward, where it is joined to the head; and the baſe is encircled with a certain callous ſubſtance, like that of parrots. It is aſh-coloured near the baſe, and red towards the point. The eyes, which are grey, are ſurrounded with a protuberant ſkin of a vivid colour. The legs of this bird are formed like thoſe of the reſt of the tribe; it is therefore with difficulty that it riſes, and it frequently falls before it gets upon the wing; but as it is a ſmall bird (not exceeding a pigeon in ſize) when it once riſes, it can continue its flight with great facility.

Theſe and all the ſmaller birds of the penguin kind, make no ſort of neſt, but lay their eggs either in the crevices of rocks, or in holes under ground near the ſhore. The latter ſituation

ation is generally made choice of, becauſe the auk, the puffin, the guillemot, and many others, cannot eaſily riſe to the neſt when it is in a lofty ſituation.

Theſe birds are abſent all the winter, viſiting regions too remote for diſcovery.

THE WILD SWAN.

THESE birds frequent our coaſts in large flocks when the winters are ſevere; but we cannot learn that they ever breed in Great Britain. Like moſt other water-fowl, they prefer for that purpoſe thoſe places that are leaſt frequented by mankind; the lakes and foreſts of the diſtant Lapland are therefore filled, during ſummer, with myriads of water-fowl; and ſwans, geeſe, the duck tribe, divers, &c. paſs that ſeaſon there; but in autumn return to us, and to other more hoſpitable ſhores.

The wild ſwan is leſs than the tame by almoſt a fourth; the former weighing but ſixteen pounds and three quarters, and the latter twenty pounds. The tame ſwan is entirely white; but the wild bird is of an aſh colour along the back, and on the tips of the wings: the eye-lids are bare and yellow, and the legs are duſky. The cry of the wild ſwan is very loud, and may be heard at a great diſtance; it is therefore ſometimes called the hooper.

The TAME SWAN.

THE ſwan was conſidered as a high delicacy among the ancients, and the gooſe was abſtained from as totally indigeſtible. Modern manners have inverted taſtes; the gooſe is now become the favourite, and the ſwan is ſeldom brought to table, except for the purpoſes of oſtentation.

The ſwan is the largeſt of the Britiſh birds: it is diſtinguiſhed from the wild ſwan by its ſize, which is much larger, and by the bill, which in the tame bird is red, and the tip and ſide black: a black callous knob projects over the baſe of the upper chap. In old birds the whole plumage is white, and in young ones aſh-coloured. The legs are duſky. The ſwan lays ſeven or eight white eggs, which ſhe is near two months in hatching. Its chief food is herbs growing in the water, roots and ſeeds growing near the margin, and inſects. No bird perhaps makes ſo inelegant a figure out of the water, or has the command of ſuch beautiful attitudes in that element as the ſwan.

It is extremely difficult to reconcile the accounts of the ancients with the experience of the moderns, concerning the vocal powers of this bird. The tame ſwan is one of the moſt ſilent of animals and the wild one has a loud and very diſagreeable note; there is not the ſmalleſt degree of melody in either, and yet it was the general opinion of antiquity that the ſwan was a moſt melodious bird. The ancients,

cients, indeed, held a ſtill more ſingular opinion, imagining that the ſwan foretold its own death. It is ſaid a ſwan will live three hundred years; and Willoughby, who cannot be accuſed of eaſy credulity, is inclined to believe the report. A gooſe, as he juſtly obſerves, has been known to live an hundred years; and the ſwan being a larger bird, and its fleſh of a firmer texture, may be ſuppoſed to live much longer.

Swans were formerly ſo much eſteemed in England, that by an act of Henry IV. c. 6. no one, except the king's ſon, was permitted to keep a ſwan, unpoſſeſſed of a freehold of five marks a year. And by ſtat. 2. Henry VII. the puniſhment for taking their eggs was impriſonment for a year and a day, and a fine at the king's pleaſure. At preſent they are leſs valued for the delicacy of their fleſh, but great numbers of them are ſtill preſerved for their beauty. They are in great abundance on the Thames and the Trent, and particularly on the ſalt-water inlet of the ſea, near Abbotſbury in Dorſetſhire.

THE GOOSE.

THE gooſe, in its wild ſtate, always retains the ſame marks: the whole upper part is aſh-coloured; the breaſt and belly are of a dirty white; the quill feathers and the tail are duſky, the latter being edged with white; the bill is narrow, black at the baſe and tip, and red in the middle; the legs are of a ſaffron co-

lour,

lour, and the claws are black. In its domeſtic ſtate the gooſe, as well as other animals, varies almoſt infinitely in its colours.

The wild gooſe is ſuppoſed to breed in the retired parts of the north of Europe, and at the approach of winter to deſcend into more temperate regions. Theſe birds are often ſeen in flocks from fifty to an hundred, flying at very great heights, and preſerving great regularity in their motion; ſometimes forming a ſtraight line; at other times aſſuming the ſhape of a wedge, which facilitates their progreſs. Their cry is frequently heard when they are at an imperceptible diſtance above us. It is probable that this is a note of mutual encouragement, as they ſeldom exert it when they alight in thoſe journies. When they deſcend to the ground, they range themſelves in a line, like cranes; and ſeem rather to have come down for reſt, than for any other refreſhment. When they have continued in this ſituation for an hour or two, one of them has been heard to ſound a kind of charge, with a loud note, which has been punctually attended to by the others, and they have immediately purſued their journey with renewed alacrity.

The wild gooſe, and many other varieties, agree in one common character of feeding upon vegetables, and being remarkable for their fecundity; but the tame gooſe is the moſt fruitful of the kind. Having very few enemies, it leads a ſafer and more plentiful life, and its prolific powers increaſe in proportion to its eaſe: it is frequently known to lay upwards of twenty

twenty eggs, but the wild gooſe ſeldom exceeds eight. The tame female is very aſſiduous in hatching her eggs, during which time ſhe receives two or three viſits in the day from the gander; who ſometimes drives her from the neſt to take her place, which he fills with great ſtate and compoſure.

When the young are excluded, the pride of the gander is inconceivable: conſidering himſelf as a champion to defend his young, and to keep off even the ſuſpicion of danger, he purſues dogs and men that never attempt to moleſt him; and when he has attempted to attack a maſtiff, or any other animal, to whoſe contempt alone he is indebted for his ſafety, he returns in triumph to his female and her brood, ſcreaming and clapping his wings, as if conſcious of having obtained a victory.

The fleſh of a young gooſe is certainly very good eating; but the value of this bird is greatly increaſed by its feathers; not to mention the quills, which are ſo eaſily converted into pens, and thereby become eſſentially uſeful to the ſcholar, the lawyer, and the trader; the feathers are highly valuable in another capacity, as the warmeſt and ſofteſt beds are made of them.

Vaſt quantities of tame geeſe are kept in the fens in Lincolnſhire, which are plucked about the neck, breaſt, and back once, if not twice a year. Theſe feathers are a conſiderable article of commerce; but thoſe of Somerſetſhire are moſt eſteemed by the trade, as thoſe of Ireland are reckoned the worſt.

Feathers

Feathers are cured by laying them in a room in an open expoſure to the ſun, and, when dried, putting them in bags, and beating them well with poles to get the dirt off. Nothing, however, but time, will prevent the ſmell which ariſes from the putrefaction of the oil contained in every feather: laying upon them is the only remedy; old feathers are therefore much more valuable than new.

Geeſe are very profitable to the farmer for their fleſh, their feathers, and their greaſe. They will live upon commons or any ſort of paſtures, and need very little care or attendance; only they ſhould have plenty of water. The largeſt geeſe are reckoned the beſt.

Geeſe ſhould lay in the ſpring; the earlier the better, becauſe of their price, and their having a ſecond brood. They uſually lay twelve or ſixteen eggs. You may know when they will lay, by their carrying ſtraw in their mouths; and when they will ſit, by their continuing on their neſts after they have laid. A gooſe ſits thirty days; but if the weather be fair and warm, they will hatch three or four days ſooner. After the goſlings are excluded, ſome keep them in the houſe ten or twelve days, and feed them with curds, barley-meal, bran, &c. Others put them out at firſt, and perhaps ſucceed as well as the former. One gander is ſufficient for five geeſe.

If you would fat green geeſe, you muſt ſhut them up when they are about a month old, and they will be fat in about a month more. Be ſure to let them have always by them, in a ſmall

ſmall rack, ſome fine hay, which will greatly haſten their fatting. But for fatting of older geeſe, it is commonly done when they are about ſix months old, in or ſoon after harveſt, when they have been in ſtubble-fields, from which food ſome kill them. But thoſe who are deſirous of having them very fat, ſhould ſhut them up for a fortnight or three weeks, and feed them with oats, ſplit beans, barley meal, or ground malt mixed with milk; but the beſt thing to fatten them with is malt mixed with beer. You muſt however obſerve, in fattening all ſorts of water-fowl, that they uſually ſit with their bills upon their rumps, where they ſuck out the greateſt part of their moiſture and fatneſs at a ſmall bunch of feathers, which you will find ſtanding upright on their rumps, and always moiſt, with which they trim their feathers; this renders them more oily and ſlippery than the feathers of other fowls, and cauſes the water to ſlip off them. If therefore theſe upright feathers are cut away cloſe, they will become fat in leſs time, and with leſs meat than otherwiſe. Geeſe will likewiſe feed on and fatten well with carrots cut ſmall and given them; or if you give them rye before, or about Midſummer, it will ſtrengthen them, and keep them in health, that being commonly their ſickly time.

THE BARNACLE.

THE length of this bird is about two feet and one inch; the breadth four feet five inches, and the weight about five pounds; the bill is black, and not quite two inches long: the head is ſmall, and the forehead and cheeks white; and a black line extends from the bill to the eyes: the neck, the hind part of the head, and the upper part of the breaſt and back are of a deep black: the belly and the coverts of the tail are white; the back, ſcapulars, and coverts of the wings, are beautifully barred with grey, black, and white: the tail and legs are black.

During winter, theſe birds appear in vaſt flocks on the north-weſt coaſts of this kingdom. They are naturally very wild and ſhy; but, when taken, grow as familiar as our tame geeſe in a very few days. They quit our ſhores in February, and go to breed in Lapland, Greenland, and Spitſbergen.

THE TAME DUCK.

THIS is the moſt eaſily reared of any of our domeſtic animals. The very inſtincts of the young ones direct them to their favorite element; and, though they are hatched and conducted by the hen, they deſpiſe the admonitions of their leader. All birds have their manners rather from nature than education; and

and thoſe of the duck kind, in particular, follow their appetites, not their tutor, and attain their various perfections without a guide.

Of the tame duck there are not leſs than ten different varieties, and Briſſon reckons upwards of twenty of the wild. The moſt obvious diſtinction, however, between wild and tame ducks is in the colour of their feet; thoſe of the tame duck being black, and thoſe of the wild duck yellow.

The common tame ſpecies of ducks take their origin from the mallard, and may be traced to it by unerring characters. The drakes, however they vary in colour, always retain the curled feathers of the tail; and both ſexes the form of the bill of the wild kind.

The mallard is uſually about twenty-three inches in length, thirty-five inches in breadth, and weighs about two pounds and an half: the bill is greeniſh, inclining to yellow; and the head and neck are of a deep ſhining green. Almoſt a circle of white extends round the lower part of the neck; but the circle wants about a fourth of being complete. The upper part of the breaſt is of a purpliſh red, and the beginning of the back is of the ſame colour; the breaſt and belly are grey, marked with tranſverſe ſpeckled lines of a duſky hue. The ſcapulars are white, elegantly barred with brown. The ſpot on the wing is of a rich purple; and the tail conſiſts of twenty-four feathers. The male of this ſpecies is diſtinguiſhed by four middle feathers, which are black and ſtrongly curled upwards; but the females have not this

mark. Their plumage is of a pale reddiſh brown ſpotted with black; and their legs are of a ſaffron colour.

Ducks require no charge in keeping, for they live on loſt corn, ſnails, &c. for which reaſon they are very proper for gardens. Once in the year they lay a great number of eggs, eſpecially a ſort of duck which turns up its bill more than the common kind. When they ſit they require no attendance, except they have a little barley or offal-corn near them, that they may not ſtraggle far from their neſts to chill their eggs. They are reckoned to be better hatched under a hen than a duck; becauſe while they are young, the hen will not lead them ſo often into the water. Some think it very proper to cut off the feathers from their rumps; becauſe, when their tails are wet, it often occaſions their drowning. As to the fattening of them, it may be done in three weeks time, by giving them any kind of corn or grain, and plenty of water. Ground malt, wet either with milk or water, is beſt.

THE EIDER DUCK.

THIS uſeful ſpecies is found in the weſtern iſles of Scotland, but in great abundance in Norway, Iceland, and Greenland, from whence is imported a vaſt quantity of the down, known by the name of Eider, which is furniſhed by theſe birds. Its remarkably light, elaſtic, and warm qualities, make it highly eſteemed as a ſtuffing

ſtuffing for coverlids, by thoſe whom infirmities render unable to ſupport the weight of common blankets.

THE WILD DUCK.

All the varieties of wild ducks live in the manner of our domeſtic ducks, keeping together in flocks in the winter, and flying in pairs in ſummer, rearing their young by the water ſide, and leading them to their food as ſoon as they eſcape the ſhell. They uſually build their neſts among heath or ruſhes, at no great diſtance from the water; and lay twelve, fourteen, or more eggs before they ſit. But, though this is their general method, their dangerous ſituation on the ground ſometimes obliges them to change their manner of living; and their aukward neſts are frequently ſeen exalted on the tops of trees. This muſt be attended with great difficulty, as the bill of a duck is but ill-formed for building a neſt, or furniſhing it with ſuch materials as to give it ſufficient ſtability to ſtand the weather. The neſt thus elevated generally conſiſts of long graſs, mixed with heath, and lined with the bird's own feathers. But, in proportion as the climate is colder, the neſt is more artificially made and has a warmer lining. In the Arctic regions, all the birds of this kind take incredible pains to protect their eggs from the ſeverity of the weather. The gull and the penguin tribe ſeem to diſregard the moſt intenſe cold in thoſe regions, but the duck forms itſelf a hole to lay in, ſhel-

ters the approach, lines it with a layer of graſs and clay, another of moſs within that, and then a warm coat of down or feathers.

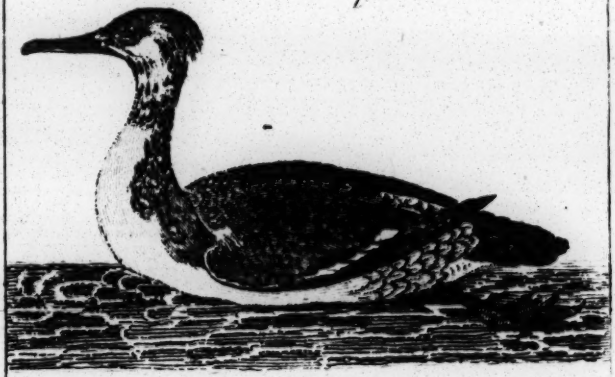
As theſe birds poſſeſs the faculties of flying and ſwimming, they are principally birds of paſſage, and probably perform their journies acroſs the ocean as well on the water as in the air. Thoſe which viſit this country on the approach of winter, are neither ſo fat nor ſo well taſted as thoſe that remain with us the whole year; their fleſh is often lean, and generally fiſhy. This flavour it has perhaps contracted in the journey; their food in the lakes of Lapland, from whence they deſcend, being generally of the inſect kind.

When they arrive among us, they fly about in flocks in ſearch of a proper reſidence for the winter. In the choice of this they have two objects in view; to be near their food, though remote from interruption. They prefer a lake in the neighbourhood of a marſh, where there is alſo a cover of woods, and where inſects are the moſt plentiful. Lakes which have a marſh on one ſide, and a wood on the other, generally abound with wild fowl.

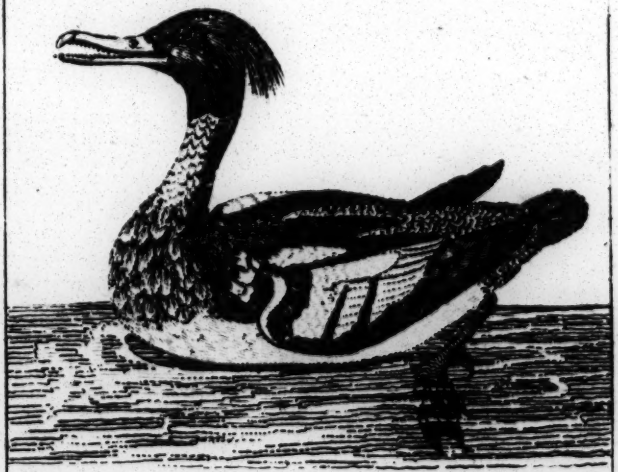
Wild ducks, when flying in the air, are often lured down from their heights by the loud voice of the mallard from below; all the ſtragglers attend to this call; and, in the courſe of ten or fifteen days, a lake that was quite naked before, becomes black with water-fowl; having deſerted their Lapland retreats to viſit theſe ducks which reſide continually among us.

They

Male red breasted Goosander



Female red breasted Goosander



They uſually make choice of that part of the lake where they are inacceſſible to the approach of the fowler, in which they all appear huddled together, and are extremely loud and buſy. Many of theſe are caught in ſpringes. The greateſt quantities, however, are taken in decoys, which are well known in the neighbourhood of London, though very little uſed in the remoter parts of the country.

THE GOOSANDER.

THE gooſander frequents our rivers, and other freſh waters, eſpecially in ſevere winters; they are excellent divers, and live on fiſh. The length of the male is about two feet four inches, the breadth three feet two inches, and the weight four pounds. The female, which is ſometimes called the dun-diver, is leſs than the male.

THE VELVET DUCK.

THE male of this ſpecies is larger than the tame duck. The bill is broad and ſhort, yellow on the ſides, black in the middle, and the hook red: the head, and part of the neck is black, tinged with green: behind each ear is a white ſpot; and in each wing is a white feather; the reſt of the plumage is of a fine black, and of the ſoft and delicate appearance of velvet: the legs and feet are red; the webs black; the female is entirely of a deep brown colour, the

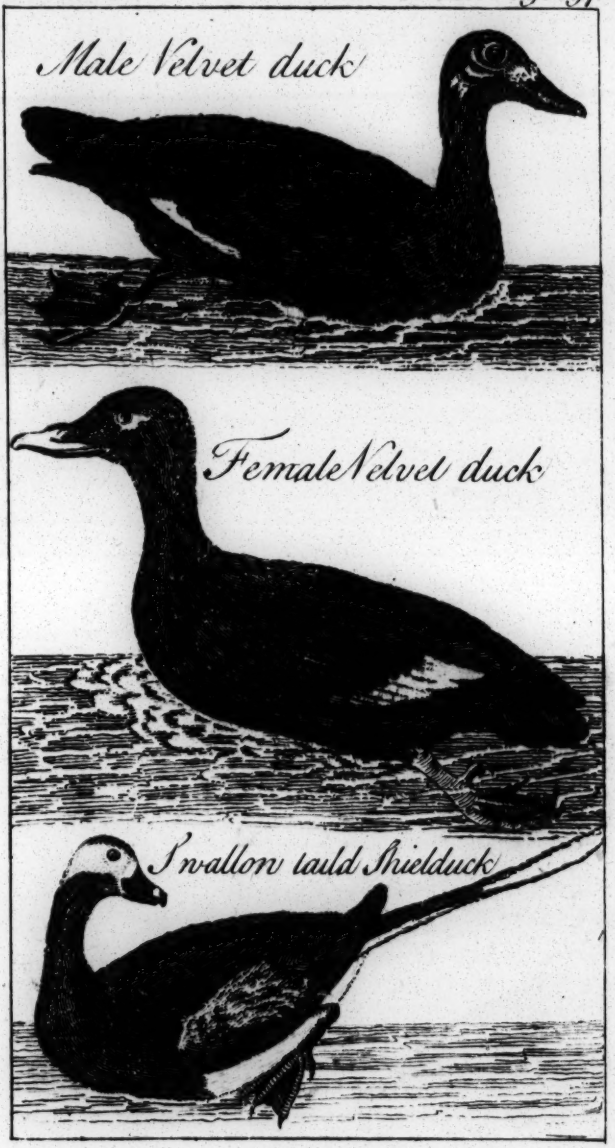
marks behind each ear and on the wings excepted: the bill is nearly like that of the male.

THE SHIELDRAKE.

THE length of the male of this elegant ſpecies is two feet; the breadth three feet and a half; and the weight two pounds ten ounces. The bill is of a bright red, ſwelling at the baſe into a knob, which is moſt conſpicuous in the ſpring; the head and upper part of the neck is of a fine blackiſh green; the lower part of the neck is white; the breaſt, and the upper part of the back is ſurrounded with a broad band of bright orange-bay; the coverts of the wings and the middle of the back are white; the neareſt ſcapulars black, the others white; the greater quill-feathers are black; the exterior webs of the next are a fine green, and thoſe of the three ſucceeding, orange; the coverts of the tail are white; the tail itſelf of the ſame colour, and, except the two outermoſt feathers, tipt with black; the belly is white, divided lengthways by a black line; the legs of a pale fleſh colour. Theſe birds frequent the ſea-coaſts, and breed in rabbit holes.

THE WIGEON.

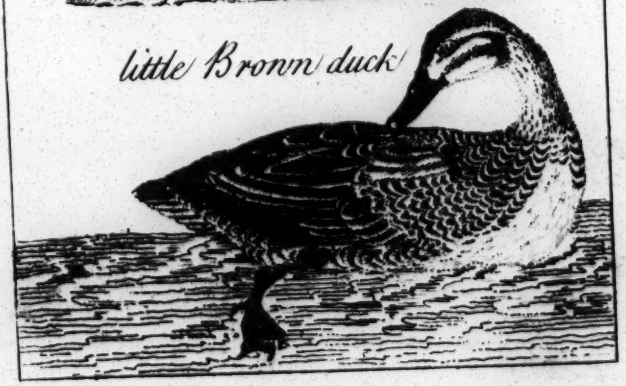
THE length of the wigeon is twenty inches; the breadth two feet three inches; and the weight about twenty-three ounces. The bill is lead-coloured, and black at the end; the head,


Male Velvet duck
Female Velvet duck
Swallow tailed Shieldduck

White throated duck

Gargancy

little Brown duck



head, and upper-part of the neck is of a bright light bay; the forehead ſomewhat paler, and in ſome almoſt white; the plumage of the back and ſides are elegantly marked with narrow, black, and white undulated lines; the breaſt is of a purpliſh hue, and is ſometimes marked with round black ſpots; the belly is white, and the legs duſky. The head of the female is of a ruſty-brown, ſpotted with black; the back is of a deep brown edged with a paler; and the belly white.

THE GARGANEY.

THIS bird is of a ſize between the wigeon and the teal. The bill is of a deep lead colour; the crown of the head is duſky, marked with oblong ſtreaks; on the chin is a large black ſpot; from the corner of each eye is a long white line, pointing to the back of the neck: the cheeks, and upper part of the neck, are of a pale purple, marked with minute oblong lines of white, pointing downwards; the breaſt is of a light brown, marked with ſemi-circular bars of black; the belly is white; the tail is duſky; and the legs of a lead colour. The female has an obſcure white mark over the eye; the reſt of the plumage is of a browniſh aſh colour.

THE TEAL.

THE teal weighs about twelve ounces; the length of this bird is about fifteen inches, and

its breadth twenty-eight inches. The bill is black; the head and the upper part of the neck are of a deep bay; from the bill to the hind part of the head extends a broad bar of gloſſy changeable green, bounded on the lower ſide by a narrow white line; the lower part of the neck, the beginning of the back, and the ſides under the wings, are elegantly marked with waved lines of black and white; the breaſt and belly are of a dirty white; the tail is ſharp pointed, and duſky. The female is of a browniſh aſh colour, ſpotted with black.

THE FULMAR.

THIS is generally an inhabitant of the iſle of St. Kilda, where it makes its appearance in November, and continues the whole year, except September and October. This bird is of great uſe to the iſlanders; it ſupplies them with oil for their lamps, down for their beds, a delicacy for their tables, a balſam for their wounds, and a medicine for their diſeaſes. It is alſo a certain prognoſticator of the change of the wind; if it comes to land, no weſt wind is expected for ſome time; and the contrary when it returns and keeps at ſea.

The fulmar, like all the petrels, has a peculiar faculty of ſpouting from its bill, to a conſiderable diſtance, a large quantity of pure oil, which it does by way of defence, into the face of any one that attempts to take it; ſo that they are, for the ſake of this panacea, ſeized by ſurprize; and this oil is ſubſervient to the above-men-

little Petrel

Fulmar

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mentioned medical uſes. Martin informs us that it has been uſed with ſucceſs in London and Edinburgh in rheumatic caſes.

This bird is larger than the common gull; the bill is very ſtrong, yellow, and hooked at the end. The noſtrils are compoſed of two large tubes, lodged in one ſheath; the head, neck, belly, and tail, are white; and the back and coverts of the wings aſh-coloured; the quill feathers are duſky; the legs yellowiſh. Inſtead of a back toe, it has only a ſort of ſtraight ſpur. The fulmar feeds on the blubber or fat of whales, &c. which, being ſoon convertible into oil, ſupplies them conſtantly with means of defence, as well as proviſion for their young.

THE WATER-RAIL.

THE body of this bird is long and ſlender, with ſhort concave wings. It is leſs fond of flying than running, which it does very ſwiftly along the edges of brooks covered with buſhes; and as it runs frequently flirts up its tail: in flying it hangs down its legs.

Its weight is four ounces and a half. The length of this bird to the end of the tail is twelve inches, the breadth ſixteen inches, and the weight four ounces. The bill is ſlender, ſlightly incurvated, and one inch three quarters in length; the upper chap is black, edged with red; the lower, orange-coloured, and the irides red; the head, the hind part of the neck, the back, and coverts of the wings and tail, are black,

black, edged with an olive-brown; the baſe of the wing is white; the throat, breaſt, and belly, are aſh-coloured; the tail, black; the legs of a duſky fleſh-colour, and placed far behind.

THE KING-FISHER.

THIS bird is ſomewhat larger than the ſwallow, and its ſhape is clumſy; the legs are very ſmall, and the bill diſproportionably long, being two inches from the baſe to the tip; the upper chap is black, and the lower chap yellow; the top of the head, and the coverts of the wings, are of a deep blackiſh green, ſpotted with bright azure; the back and tail are of the moſt reſplendent azure; the belly is orange-coloured, and a broad mark of the ſame colour extends from the bill to beyond the eyes, near which there is a large white ſpot; the tail, which is ſhort, conſiſts of twelve feathers of a rich deep blue, and the feet are of a reddiſh yellow.

This is one of the moſt rapacious little animals that ſkim the deep. It chiefly frequents the banks of rivers, and, like the oſprey, takes its prey by balancing itſelf at a certain diſtance above the water for a conſiderable ſpace, and then, darting into the deep, ſeizes the fiſh with inevitable certainty.

This ſpecies is the mute *halcyon* of Ariſtotle, which he deſcribes with unuſual preciſion. After deſcribing the bird, he gives a deſcription of the neſt, which appears as fabulous and extravagant

travagant as any of the ſtories which the moſt inventive of the ancients have delivered.

As this bird builds her neſt near the ſea, that ſhe might not be interrupted in this taſk, ſhe has been ſaid to be poſſeſſed of a charm to allay the fury of the waves; and that, during that period, the mariner may ſail in full ſecurity; they were therefore ſtiled *halcyon* days; and in after times thoſe words expreſſed any ſeaſon of proſperity.

The king-fiſher, however, with which we are now acquainted, has none of thoſe powers of allaying the ſtorm, or building upon the waves; it is contented to make its neſt on the banks of rivers, in ſuch ſituations as not to be affected by the riſing of the ſtream.

The female begins to lay early in the ſeaſon, and produces her firſt brood about the beginning of April. The fidelity of the male exceeds even that of the turtle; and while the female is thus employed, he ſupplies her with large quantities of fiſh: at that ſeaſon the hen, contrary to moſt other birds, is found plump and in good condition.

The modern vulgar have their fables concerning this bird as well as the ancients. It is an opinion generally received among them, that the fleſh of the king-fiſher will not corrupt, and that vermin will not approach it. With equal foundation it is ſaid, that when this bird is hung up dead, its breaſt is always pointing to the north. It is certain, however, that the fleſh of this bird is utterly unfit to be eaten, though

though its beautiful plumage preſerves its luſtre longer than that of any other bird we know.

THE BEE-EATER.

THE form of this bird is like that of the king-fiſher, and the ſize exceeds that of a black-bird. The bill reſembles that of a king-fiſher, except that it bends a little more downwards; the feet alſo are exactly like thoſe of the king-fiſher. The tongue is ſlender, rough towards the end, and jagged as if it had been torn. The head is large in proportion to the body, and the feathers at the baſe of the upper chap are white ſhaded with green and yellow. A ſtreak of black paſſes from the corners of the bill along each ſide of the head, and extends beyond the eyes. On the upper part of the head the feathers are of a pale yellow; the belly, neck, and breaſt are of a bluiſh green colour. The tail, which is about three inches long, is blue in ſome, and green in others.

FINIS.

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